

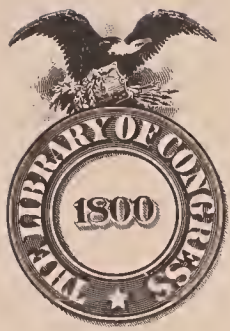


hISTORY  
OF

**I**NDIA



5 vols.



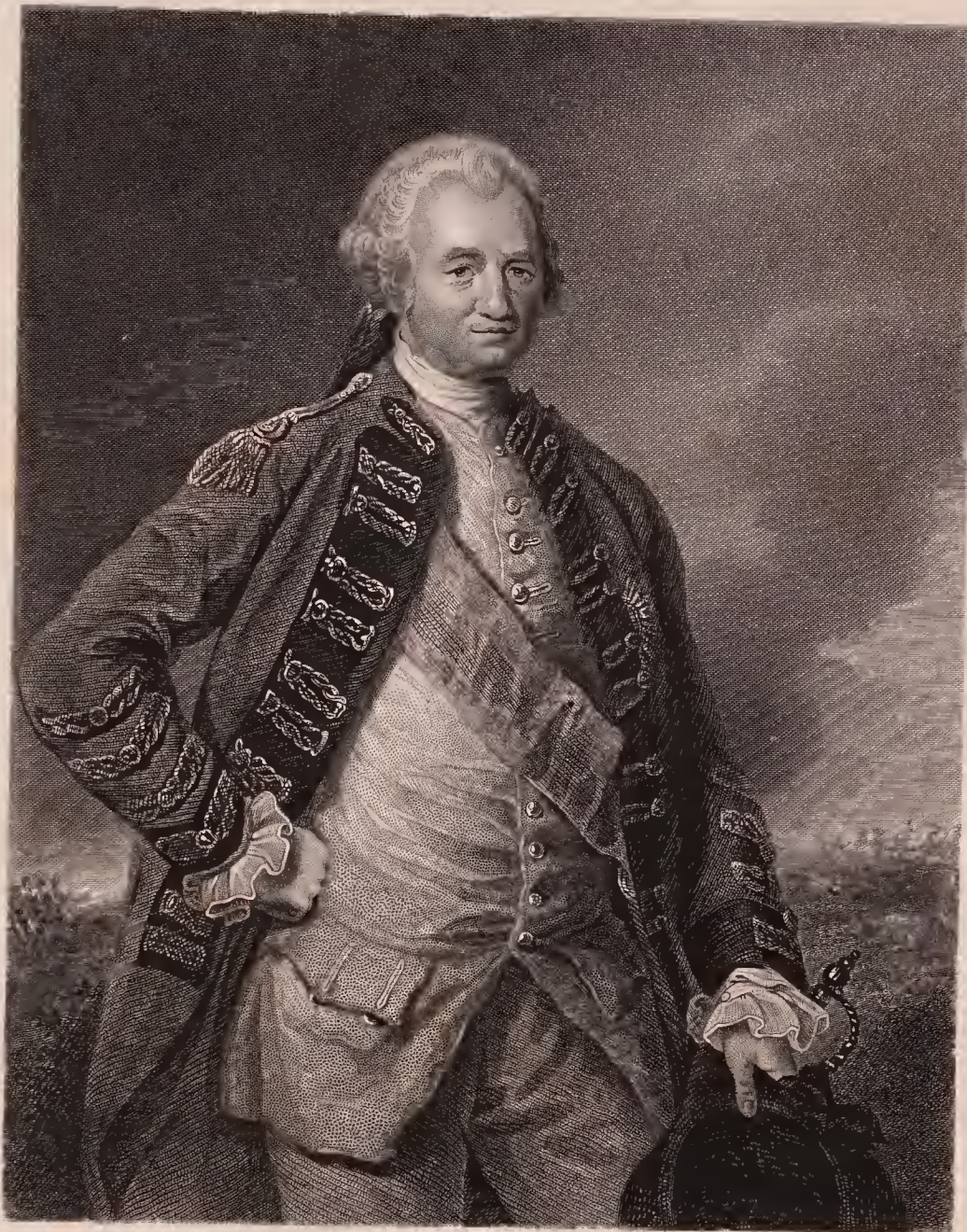


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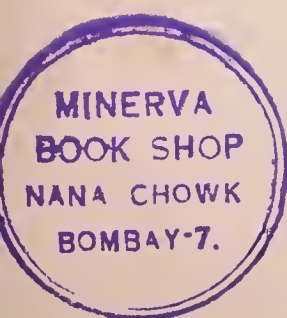


G. Stedart.

LORD CLIVE.

*From a Painting by N. Dance.*

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W Daniell R.A. Del:

T. Lochran. Sculp:

SHAH JAHAN.







MADRAS.



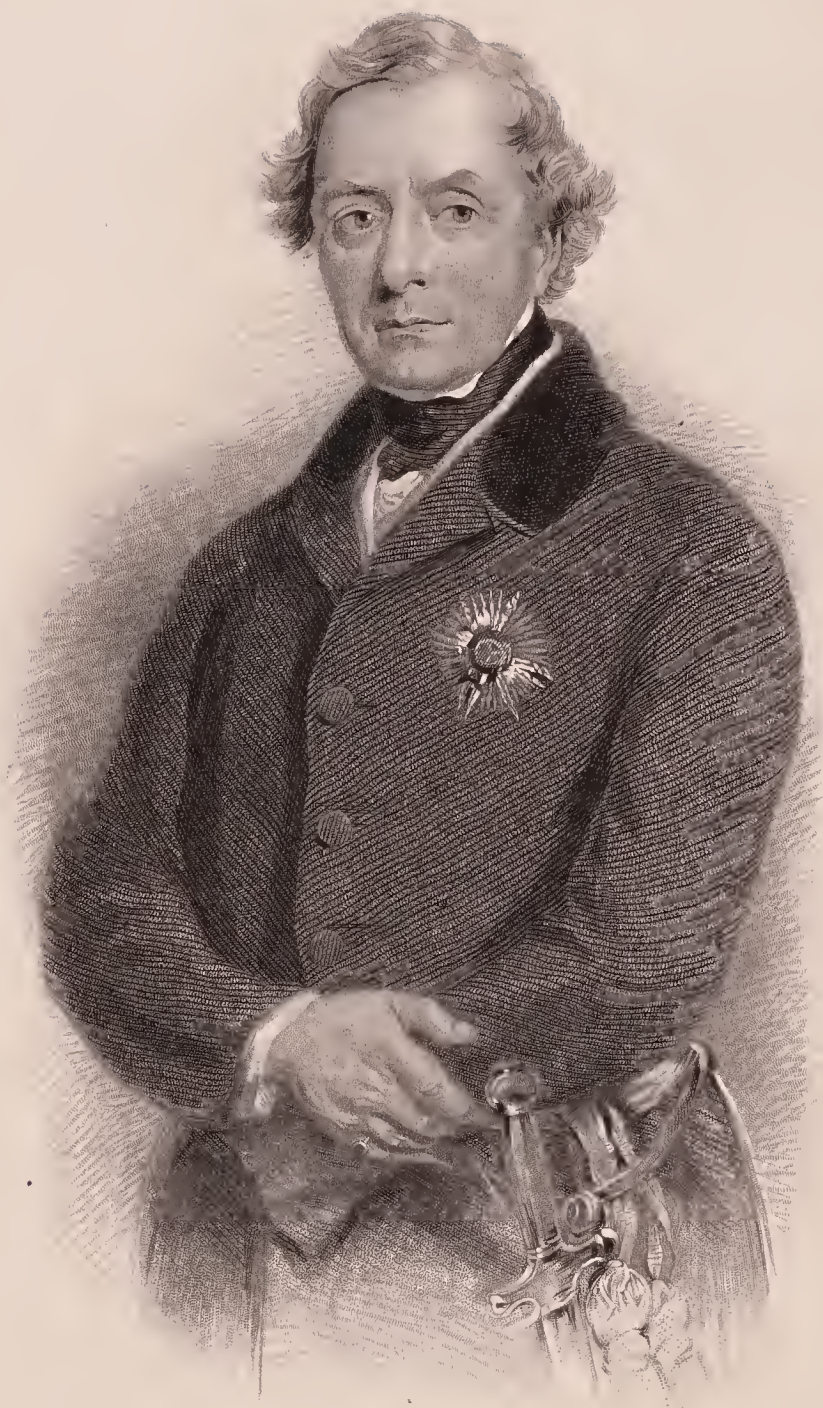




THE FORTRESS OF CHUNAR.  
ON THE GANGES.







THE RT HON<sup>BLE</sup> VISCOUNT HARDINGE, G.C.B. & C.







W. Daniell R. A. Del.

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ON THE ISLAND OF ELEPHANTA.







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BOATS ON THE GANGES.







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THE UPPER CAVES, SALSETTE.







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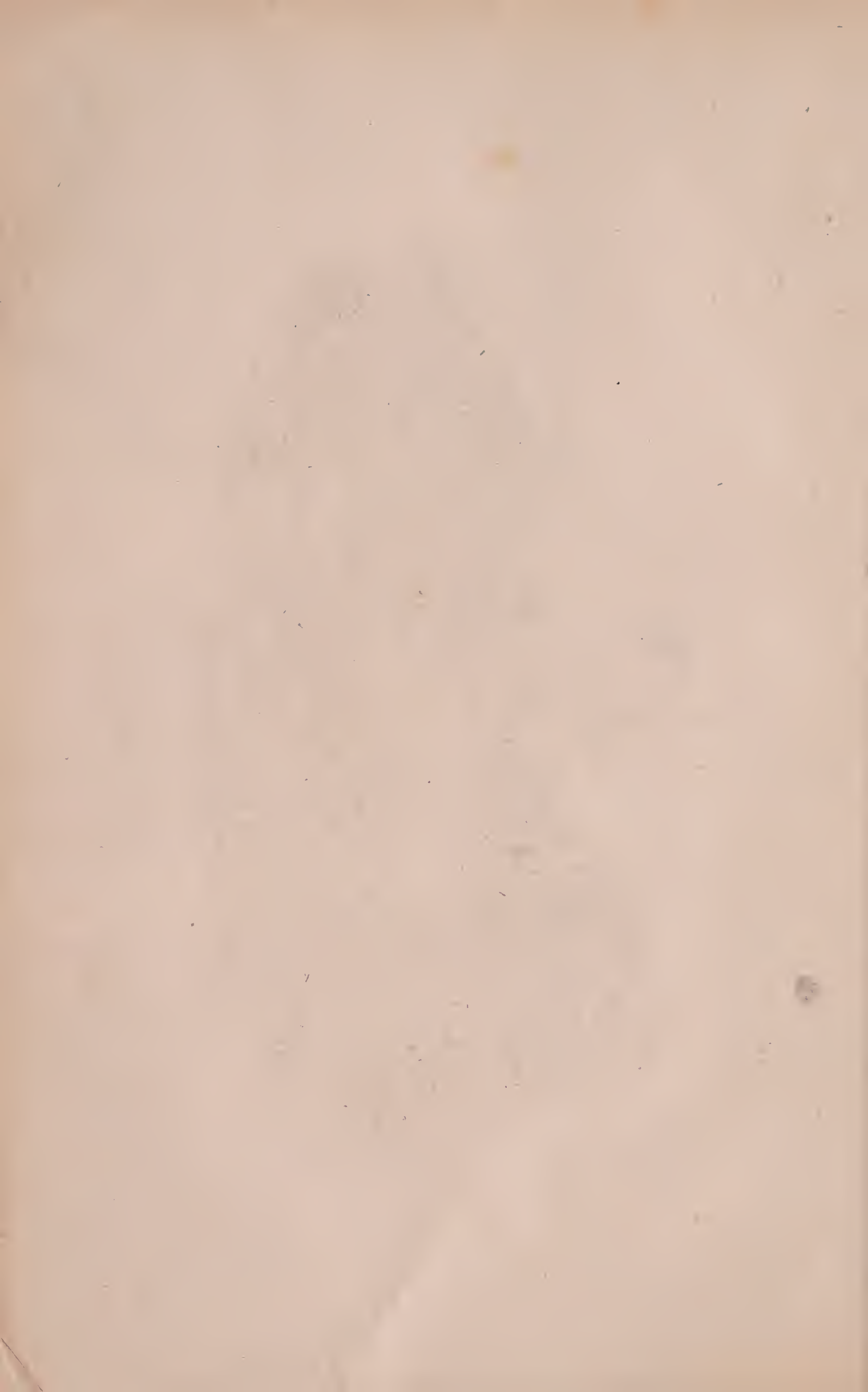




E Brandard

THE BRITISH ARMY BEFORE CABUL.







E. Brandard

THE BRITISH ARMY BEFORE CABUL.







W. Daniell R.A. Del.

J. C. Armytage, Sculp.

ON THE BALIAPATAM RIVER







A MOGUL TROOPER.

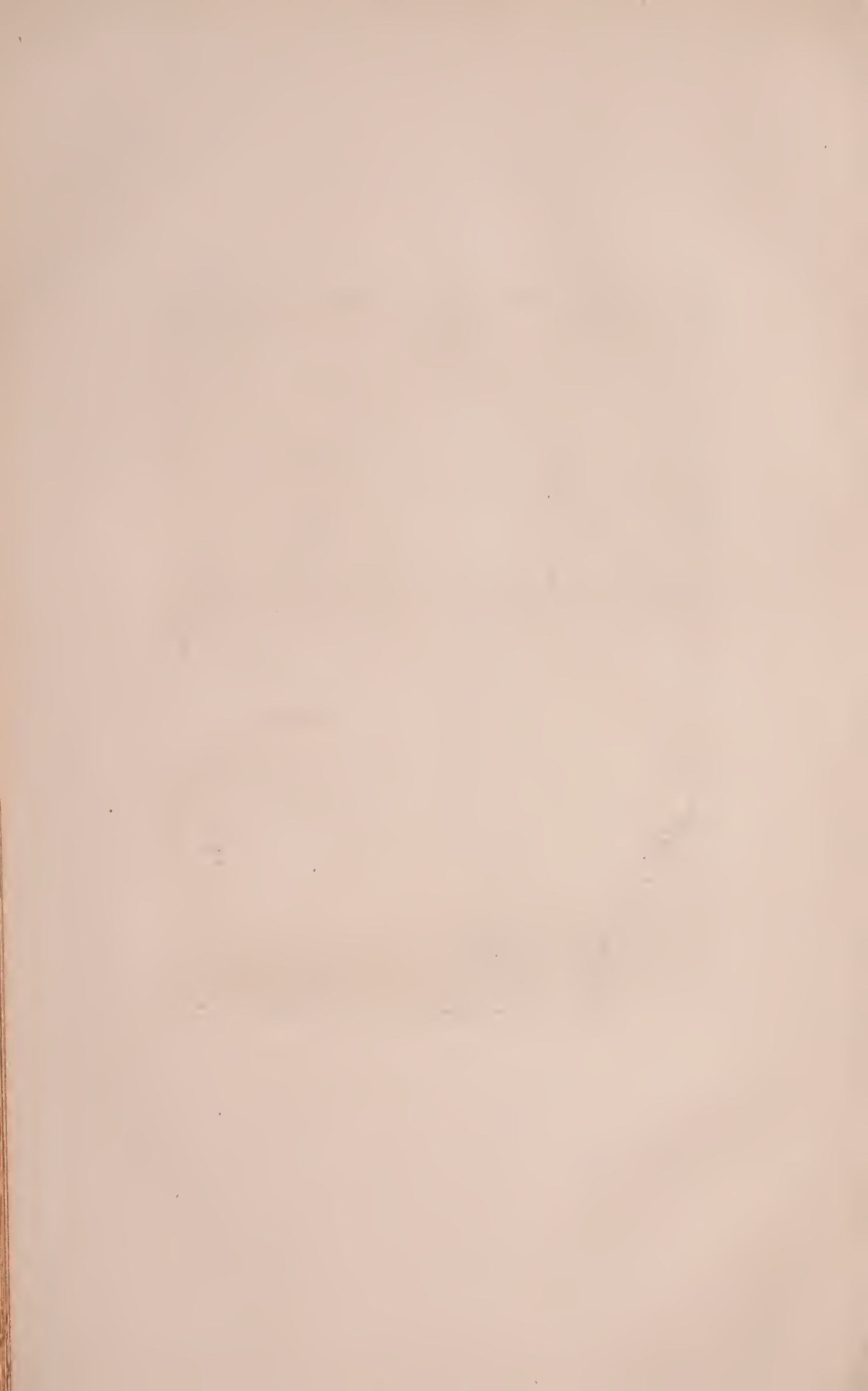






FIELD MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.







C. Cousen

THE FORT OF GWALIOR.  
FROM THE NORTH WEST.



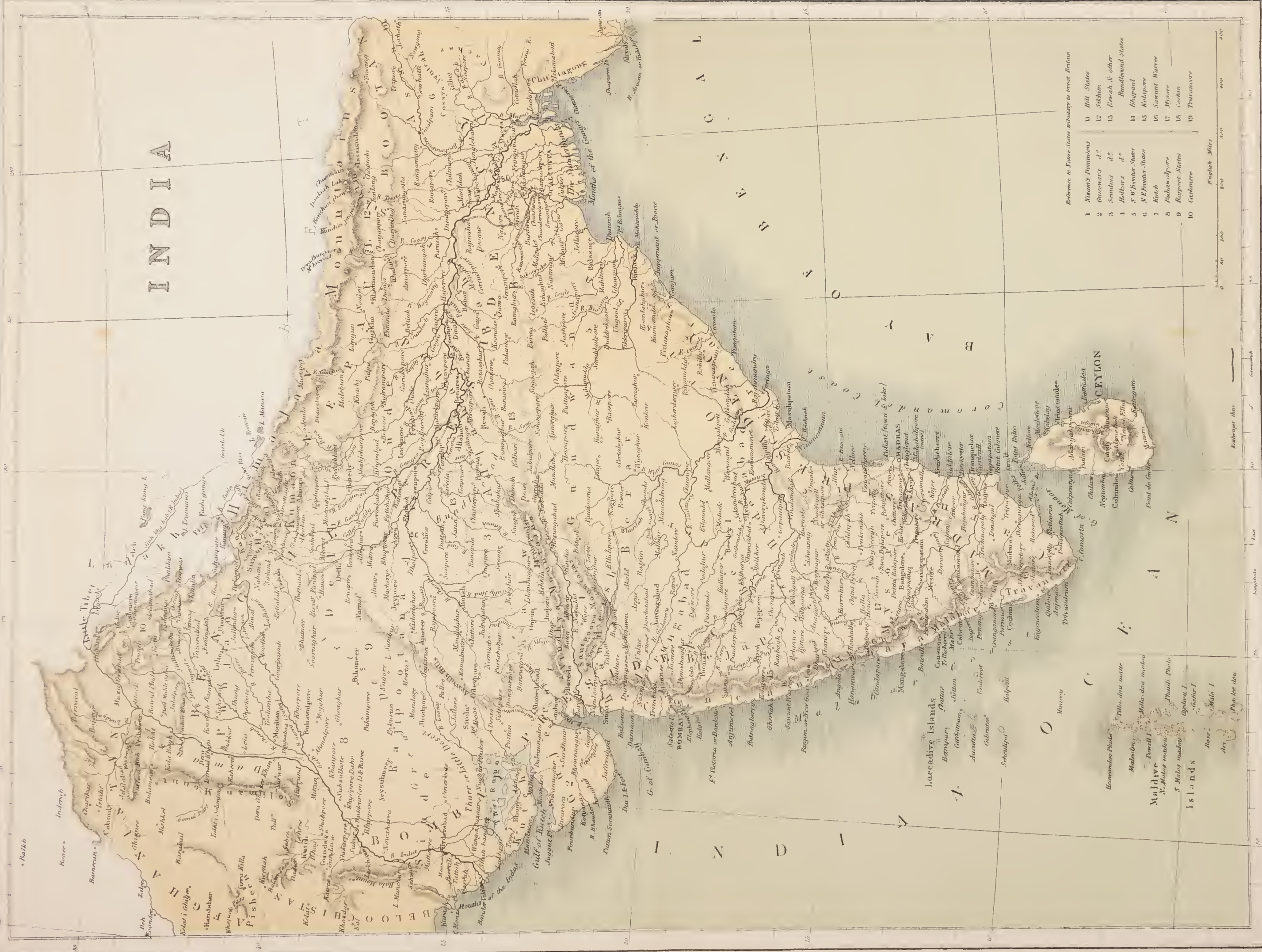








# INDIA



Reference to Year States arbitrary to Great Britain

1	1818	1818	1818
2	1818	1818	1818
3	1818	1818	1818
4	1818	1818	1818
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6	1818	1818	1818
7	1818	1818	1818
8	1818	1818	1818
9	1818	1818	1818
10	1818	1818	1818

English Miles  
0 100 200 300 400 500











# THE BENGAL PRESIDENCY.

English Miles  
0 50 100 150 200 250 300

Railways  
Intended d°







betray his trust, or to give up the place he commanded into the hands of the enemy. Though deprived of the co-operation of the fleet, he made so obstinate a defence, that Souja, the uncle of Coxinga, who was in command of the Chinese fleet, resolved to raise the siege without the knowledge of his nephew, with at least the force under his command. Coxinga, informed of this resolve, had him arrested, and then prosecuted his operations with such skill and vigour, that the Dutch garrison was compelled to surrender, although the succours which they had been expecting were in sight.\*

The position of the Dutch was seriously altered by the loss of this settlement. Instead of having the Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese commerce at their mercy, they were no longer able to send their own annual ships to Japan,† but with great difficulty and danger; they, however, reaped one advantage by this disaster—they established a correspondence with the Emperor of China, who consented to aid them in restraining the power of Coxinga, to prevent him from piracy in those seas, and from disturbing the commerce of the empire and Japan.

It was at this period, and by the mediation of Charles II., who had married the Infanta Catharina of Portugal, that a treaty of peace was entered into by the United Provinces and that kingdom, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties; for although the Dutch had the advantage over their adversaries in the East, their gains there were balanced by their losses in other quarters. In the West Indies the Portuguese were the victors, and they had also succeeded in wresting the Brazils from the Dutch; they were in a fair way of making still greater conquests; and their privateers were so numerous, that Holland found her trade in the Mediterranean, and on the coast of Africa, in a critical situation.

The Dutch East India Company did not regard the obligations which this treaty imposed. They acted as if they were sovereigns within the bounds of their charter. In the year 1663 they made an attack on Coulan, on the coast of Malabar, and, having reduced it, they next attacked the important post of Cannanore, and, after a severe struggle, took possession of it. They repaired the fortifications, and made a settlement there. Their next enterprise was the siege of Cochin, a city of greater importance, being a bishop's see, and the centre of a large trade. After a fierce and protracted defence, in which the loss on each side

was very severe, it fell into the hands of the Dutch. The rajah of Porca, a tributary to the Portuguese, next submitted; Cranganore was also taken; and thus in the course of a year, Commodore Goens expelled the Portuguese from all their possessions on the coast of Malabar, and thus acquired a territory one hundred and fifty leagues in length, with all the trade belonging to it, which they had enjoyed without interruption from the time of their first settlement in India. Alliances were now formed with the Zamorin of Calicut, the King of Cochin, and several other Indian princes.

On the ascent of Aurungzebe to the throne, the Dutch sent an embassy, which was graciously received. They paid the same mark of respect to the sovereigns whose dominions bordered the Bay of Bengal, by all of whom they were equally well received.

Some misunderstanding arose between the Dutch and the King of Siam. They, in consequence, withdrew their factories from his coasts. Alarmed by the injury such proceedings would necessarily inflict, he addressed the council at Batavia in a very respectful letter to know the cause, and then forwarded an ambassador to invite them back, and to assure them of his kind offices and his willingness to redress any grievances of which they had cause to complain, and of any which might arise in the process of time; accordingly the factories were re-established at Siam and Ligor. This satisfactory termination of those differences was followed by an outrage on the part of the Dutch, which to the great credit of the authorities was adequately punished. The crew of a Dutch vessel murdered thirty-five Siamese in cold blood, having first subjected to their libidinous passions their wives and daughters; but before time was allowed for a public complaint, the council caused the offenders to be apprehended. Four of them were broken on the wheel, and five hanged. It may here be also noticed to the credit of the Dutch that they attempted, and by the most feasible means, to introduce amongst their Asiatic allies European literature and civilization, by prevailing on many of the Indian princes and nobles to send their children to Batavia for education, where they were in many instances maintained at the expense of the company; but with this education was mingled their selfish objects—they took all imaginable pains to instil into their minds a high idea of the power and alleged superiority of their nation, and of their capacity to maintain the precedence which they had recently acquired.\*

\* Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 935; Basnage's *Annales des Provinces Unies*, tom. i. p. 667.

† Dapper's *Tweede Gezantschap naar Sina*, fol. 91.

\* Neuville's *Hist. Van Holland*, 2 deel lxii. cap. iv.



This policy they borrowed from the Portuguese, who had practised it with considerable success.

The expulsion from Formosa was not forgotten. In conjunction with the Chinese Tartars, they sailed with a large fleet. In their attacks on the forts they were repulsed, but in an engagement at sea, of which their allies continued passive spectators, though Coxinga distinguished himself as a gallant soldier, an experienced seaman, and a great captain, and his men fought as the Dutch had never seen Chinese fight before, the large European ships tore his junks to pieces, and totally defeated his force, and the brave Coxinga not only forfeited all his conquests, but also his life. The victors became masters of Amoy, and confidently calculated on the re-establishment of their authority in Formosa; but here they were too sanguine, old Souja, who had recovered his liberty, collected the remnants of his nephew's land and naval forces, and defeated their project. Coxinga's son\* deposed his old relative, and took the command. He proved himself a worthy scion of the stock from which he sprang, and managed his affairs with such consummate skill, that the Dutch admiral was obliged to return to Batavia, leaving unaccomplished the commission he had received.

Shortly after this victory, Tching-king-May died, and left the island to his son, Tching-ke-San, a minor. His guardians neglected his affairs, and when he arrived at man's estate, being of a mild and melancholy disposition, and the Tartars having put to death his friend and ally, the King of Fo-kien, fearing a like fate, he made a voluntary surrender of his territories, and proceeded to Peking, as an abdicated prince, in 1683, and resided there a pensioner till the end of his life. Since that time the island, or at least that part of it which belonged to the Dutch, was re-united to China. This being the last sovereignty in the hands of the Chinese, the conquest of the Tartars was now complete.

The influence exercised over the affairs of India by the war in which the states were involved with England belongs properly to the history of the British in the East, and is left for that department.

The next war in which the Dutch engaged is the most important as well as the most vigorous that was waged from the time of their establishment in the East. The kingdom of Macassar, in which, as has been detailed, the Dutch made a settlement after seizing on the Portuguese fleet, and expelling

them, comprehends the best part of the Island of Celebes, inhabited by a brave and numerous people, whose monarchs, as they had never bent to the yoke of the Portuguese, had of course a strong aversion to receive that of the Dutch. The success of their first commercial transaction was so considerable, that the council at Batavia resolved on securing a monopoly, and they prepared to get rid of the Portuguese, who shared the trade. This was no easy task; for the latter people, however odious they may have been in other quarters, were here popular by their honourable dealings, by the high estimation in which the Jesuit fathers were held, and the great success of their mission, which had given them sanguine hopes of converting the entire population; in the words of an English writer, "the king had a great value for them, and the people loved them extremely." Before any hostilities were committed, terms were proposed, and a treaty concluded, by which the king promised to make satisfaction for the alleged injuries which the Dutch made the pretext of their aggressions. These proceedings would appear from the sequel to be initiated to enable them to complete their preparations, and to take the unsuspecting islanders by surprise. A squadron of thirteen men of war was in the interim dispatched from Batavia, under the command of Admiral Speelman; he had eight hundred soldiers aboard, was accompanied by a number of transports, and had orders to see the treaty executed to the letter. With this armament he arrived before Macassar on the 19th of December, 1666.\* The morning after the arrival, the king sent to them the sum of one thousand and fifty-six ingots of gold, and one thousand four hundred and thirty rix dollars, in compensation for the injuries inflicted as they said upon them. An amicable settlement was not the object for which this large force had been prepared, consequently new grievances were discovered; and on the pretence that the king had refused to make some concessions inconsistent with his dignity, and that he had sent a fleet to attack the Island of Bouton, the admiral immediately declared war, made two descents upon the coast, destroyed by fire about one hundred vessels in the ports, fifty villages, and carried off an incredible quantity of plunder, the unsuspecting prince not apprehending such a flagrant violation of the law of nations. Speelman then proceeded to destroy the force which was engaged at Bouton, and arrived there on New

\* This chief was called by the Chinese Tching-king-May.

\* Neuville's *Hist. van Holland*, 2 deel lxii. cap. xix.; Harris, vol. i. p. 937.



Year's Day, 1667. With the small craft he forced his way into the harbour, and succeeded in detaching the allies from the troops of the King of Macassar, and compelling the latter to surrender at discretion; thus the war was ended in the space of four months.\* They behaved with as much cruelty to their prisoners as they did with perfidy in provoking the war. The capture of their vessels rendered abortive the attempt of the Portuguese to succour their friend.

The abilities and military capacity of the king, as well as the acknowledged bravery of his subjects, were matters of considerable apprehension to the Dutch, and they doubted the permanence of their authority in Celebes, as long as he retained any power. They now discovered that he had acceded to the late negotiation merely in order to obtain a respite for fresh intrigues; they asserted that he was endeavouring to insure a combination of the neighbouring princes, and representing to them that nothing else could save them from abject subjection to the company; he laboured to make them comprehend that what was every one's particular interest might be considered and adjusted when they had repelled the immediate danger, and pointed out the impolicy of consulting for their separate interests by special treaties; this he quaintly illustrated by saying that it was like mice making terms to come within the cat's reach, when they could only be safe by keeping out of it. With a grasp of mind for which Europeans seldom give orientals credit, he perceived, and endeavoured to impress upon those whose co-operation he sought, that there was a probability some one or all of the European powers who were contending for the Indian commerce would come to their assistance; that any condition was preferable to the humiliations imposed on them. He was eminently successful, as it was felt by all of them that nothing could divert him from his purpose, and that he must be absolutely crushed before he could be brought into a state of dependence or submission. At the head of the confederacy, he was in a very short space of time a more formidable enemy than ever. To meet this storm, the council at Batavia was obliged to call in the aid of all the Dutch settlements in the East, and on the 8th of June, in the same year, Speelman sailed from Amboyna with a fleet of sixteen vessels, great and small, and fourteen shallops. In an attempt to force a passage into the port of Macassar the Dutch were frustrated.

\* *Relation de la Guerre de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales contre le Roi de Macassar*, p. 240; Harris, vol. i. p. 937.

A descent by night on the Castle of Glissor was more fortunate; they succeeded in storming it, and having placed a strong garrison in it, they repulsed various attempts made for its recovery; taking advantage of its commanding situation, they poured such a multitude of bombs and red-hot bullets into the enemy's camp, which was contiguous, that they produced the greatest consternation and confusion; then a well-directed attack was made, and the enemy dislodged from their post. After having inflicted severe injuries on various parts of the island, and several of the allies being detached from the league, a treaty was again concluded in November, 1677, and the king, the neighbouring princes, and the regents of the island sent an embassy to John Maet Suichu, at Batavia, to make submission to the company.

Awaiting the result, the Dutch troops and their allies, who in the commencement of the war amounted to twelve thousand men, continued in the island; and the rainy season setting in, there broke out among them such a mortality as inspired the natives with the hope of being able to destroy them: they consequently made an attack upon the afflicted army, and massacred a great number of the dying soldiers. This put a stop to all hopes of an accommodation. The war was renewed, and, after a protracted conflict of two years, the Indians were forced to implore a peace, and to submit to far severer terms than those with which they had been previously oppressed. By this treaty, which dates from the 15th June, 1669, the company engrossed the commerce of the Island of Celebes, which secured to them, what was of far greater consequence, absolute sovereignty over the Moluccas.

This treaty\* established on a permanent basis the Dutch East India Company. It terminated all open and avowed opposition from the Indians and Portuguese; and all the opposition which from these quarters they afterwards encountered is to be considered

\* Of the articles of this treaty the sixth challenges notice, it begins thus—"All the Portuguese that can be found, without exception, shall be obliged to retire out of Macassar, and all the countries dependant on that crown; and because *we are obliged to believe that the English are great makers of mischief, and the authors of the breach of former treaties*, the regents of Macassar oblige themselves to take the first occasion to oblige them to retire out of all their territories, without ever permitting any of those two nations, or their creatures, to come and trade, or to transact any business whatever, within the extent of the country of Macassar, or even so much as to continue therein, after a certain day."—*Relation de la Guerre de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales contre le Roi de Macassar*, p. 244. The treaty is also inserted in the *Corps Diplomatique*.



rather as insurrections and rebellions than wars with independent states.

The period for which their third charter had been granted to the company had expired, and they consequently found themselves under the necessity of obtaining a new one. The republic was now directed by a statesman who was no friend to monopolies, and who had no inclination to sacrifice what he thought was right, to subserve the interest of this body,—this was the celebrated De Witt, who, by his prudence and talents, won the flattering cognomen, “Wisdom of Holland;” who, in 1653, though only twenty-eight years of age, was made pensionary, and as head of the peace party, was in constant opposition to the Prince of Orange and his adherents, who are known in history as the “Louvestein faction.” This statesman was of opinion that though companies might be necessary in the infancy of trade, and when new establishments were to be formed, yet when it was matured, it would be prejudicial to the interests of the nation at large, that power and wealth should be suffered to accumulate to an inordinate extent in the hands of the favoured few. His observation had convinced him, and he did not hesitate to promulgate his convictions, that the Dutch employed in the East India settlements were, as he said, the scum of the earth—debauched, necessitous, unprincipled, rapacious, and profligate; all which he attributed to the strict and slavish terms imposed by the company, to which none would submit who could live at home, or could afford to emigrate at his own expense. Notwithstanding his powerful opposition, on the payment of a large sum of money the fourth charter was granted for twenty-one years, dating from the commencement of the year 1666.

The extent and returns of the commerce of the company were enormous of late years, the directors divided *four hundred and fifty per cent.* upon their capital, which was about forty per cent. more than they had divided from 1622 to 1644.

At this period the Dutch, having carried

on a very lucrative trade for above forty years with Tonquin, were at variance with the authorities in that country. A brief notice of their settlement there may be interesting and instructive. Shortly after their introduction to Japan, they learnt that annually a small squadron from that country sailed to Tonquin; and that also a considerable trade was carried on there with China. One Charles Hartsink proposed to send a vessel thither from Japan, freighted with the usual commodities, and some European in addition, and various curiosities, considered a suitable present for the king. Hartsink with his cargo was well received. He sold at very high prices, and shortly sailed to Batavia with a valuable freight. Van Diemen, who then presided in India, highly commended his conduct and diligence, and resolved on settling a factory there; he wisely placed Hartsink as superintendent, who in a very short time so ingratiated himself into the favour of the king, that he took him into his councils, elevated him to the highest honours, and finally adopted him as his son. Under his management, and that of some succeeding chiefs, the affairs of the company prospered. At length, about 1664, jealousies arose, the trade gradually declined, the factories were withdrawn, but were settled there again, and continued for about forty years, when they were finally withdrawn. The Dutch probably owed to their own cupidity the deterioration of this branch of trade.

Particular attention was bestowed on the enlargement, embellishment, and fortification of Batavia, and augmenting the commercial conveniences of that port, and the names of the successive governors are honourably identified with the improvements.

Henceforth, the history of the Dutch is involved in that of the French and English, who successively became the leading powers amongst the European nations in the East; and in the records of their progress will be found the decline of a power once all powerful, and even still felt, in the East.

# THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

OF THE

## BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA

### AND THE EAST.

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#### CHAPTER L.

PROGRESS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FACTORIES IN CONTINENTAL INDIA TO THE FIRST SETTLEMENT ON THE HOOGLY.

FROM the date of the settlement of a factory at Surat, to the period of the establishment at Hoogly, and the breaking out of the civil war in England, was a time of considerable events to the company, at home and abroad. Gradually, throughout that period, the foreign agents of the company were laying the foundation of future fortune, where, and how, they suspected not. The reverses of the company subserved its ultimate greatness. The ravages and successes of the Dutch led to their ultimate humiliation, and the triumph of England and her East India Company. The states-general would have probably carried on a commerce, in the long run, successfully, rivalling that of England, had not their grasping and venal temper led them to set justice and treaty at defiance, in endeavouring to deprive the English of all share in the trade of the Eastern Archipelago; but their cupidity roused the latent energy and resources of England, which soon asserted a naval ascendancy in Europe, and ultimately all over the world. The English, at the period of which we now write, were very solicitous to injure the commerce both of the Portuguese and Dutch. That they were just as ready to circumvent and damage the Dutch, as the latter were to disparage or interrupt them, is evident from the correspondence of Sir Thomas Roe. Still, the English were incapable of the cruelties of the Dutch: much more were those of the Portuguese impossible to them. In one of Sir Thomas Roe's letters he writes:—"The Dutch are arrived at Surat, from the Red Sea, with

some money and southern commodities. *I have done my best to disgrace them; but could not turn them out without further danger. Your comfort is, here are goods enough for both.*"

In another letter he says, "The 10th, 11th, and 12th, I spent in giving the prince advice that a Dutch ship lay before Surat, and would not declare upon what design it came until a fleet arrived, which was expected at the first fit season. This I improved, to fill their heads with jealousies of the designs of the Dutch, and the dangers that might arise from them which was well taken; and, being demanded, I gave my advice, to prevent coming to a rupture with them, and yet exclude them the trade of India." Here the English ambassador, so scrupulous and just in many affairs, and especially where he was personally concerned, acted towards the Dutch, as he so bitterly complained that the Portuguese acted towards his own countrymen; but it is more than probable the representative of England was obliged by his instructions to act thus, and *necessitas non habet legem*. Besides, the provocations received by the British from both Portuguese and Dutch were so frequent and severe, that they could not but oppose those nations, if there were any British trade to be established.

The grand occasion of quarrel with the Dutch was spice. The English enjoyed a good trade in pepper, from their connection with Sumatra and Java, but the trade in the finer spices, such as cloves, nutmegs, cinnamon, &c.,



had been exclusively in the hands of the Portuguese, and was at this period becoming a monopoly in the hands of the Hollanders. The English became intensely eager to break up this monopoly by fair trade; the Dutch to keep it by force of arms. The English sent out agents from Bantam to Amboyna, Banda, and several other islands, reputed for their production of superior spices; and finally, after much mortification and disappointment, they established a factory at Macassar, then deemed an eligible depot for spice brought from other places, and which itself produced superior rice, that might be made available as an article of exchange, and which could be procured by bartering it for the fine cloths of Central India.

The general state of affairs and prospects of traffic may be gathered from the reports made by the agents soon after the company was fairly settled in factories on the coast of India. Mr. Mill thus sums up the tenor and substance of these reports:—"That Surat was the place at which the cloths of India could best be obtained, though nothing could there be disposed of in return, except China goods, spices, and money: that large quantities of Indian wove goods might be sold, and gold, camphor, and benjamin obtained, at the two factories of Acheen and Tekoo, on the Island of Sumatra: that Bantam afforded a still larger demand for the wove goods of India, and supplied pepper for the European market: that Jacatra, Jambee, and Polania, agreed with the two former places in the articles both of demand and supply, though both on a smaller scale: that Siam might afford a large vent for similar commodities, and would yield gold, silver, and deer-skins for the Japan market: that English cloth, lead, deer-skins, silks, and other goods, might be disposed of at Japan, for silver, copper and iron, though, hitherto, want of skill had rendered the adventures to that kingdom unprofitable: that, on the Island of Borneo, diamonds, bezoar stones, and gold, might be obtained at Succadania, notwithstanding the mischief occasioned by the ignorance of the first factors; but from Banjarmassin, where the same articles were found, it would be expedient, on account of the treacherous character of the natives, to withdraw the factory: that the best rice in India could be bought, and the wove goods of India sold, at Macassar: and that at Banda the same goods could be sold, and nutmegs and mace procured, even to a large amount, if the obstruction of European rivals were removed. Surat and Bantam were the seats of the company's principal establishments."

An attempt was made for the establishment of a Scottish East India Company, and a royal patent granted in 1618 to Sir James Cunningham, but withdrawn, in consequence of the interference of the London company, who made compensation for the expenses incurred. The king, in return for this concession, and with a view of sustaining the Russian company, which had long been in a precarious state, prevailed on the East India Company to unite with them in carrying on a joint-stock trade, each party advancing £30,000 per annum during the continuance of their respective charters; but the experiment failing after a trial of two seasons, the connection was dissolved at the termination of the year 1619; the loss of the East India Company being estimated at £40,000.\*

The company was much disturbed about this time by the prospect of competition with the French and Danes. The associations for Eastern commerce, formed in these countries, were not on a scale to appear formidable to the powerful resources of the Portuguese, Dutch, and English; but nevertheless these nations were all nearly as angry at the bare prospect of any other people wishing to buy spices where they were produced, as they were by their rivalry with one another. The English appear to have taken more alarm at the formation of the French and Danish companies than the Dutch or Portuguese did, and this alarm appears to have been more excited by the Danes than by the French, although the Gauls were earlier upon the great stage of furious and bitter rivalry. In separate chapters, the formation, progress, and foreign enterprises of the various East India Companies upon the continent,—other than the Portuguese and Dutch, which have been already related,—will be stated and described, so far as relates to the object of these volumes. In a former chapter it was mentioned that negotiations were opened with Persia, and a treaty of trade secured, under the superintendence of Sir Thomas Roe. That acute man, however, dissuaded the enterprise, on the ground that the Portuguese already possessed the commerce between Persia and Surat, and that the expense of protecting the trade by armaments would be too great. The general policy of Sir Thomas was to avoid, as much as possible, all armed competition, and to seek avenues of trade the least exposed to the expense of numerous crews, heavy armaments, and forts. The experience of the English verified the sagacity of these counsels. The trade opened in the Persian Gulf never became very profitable, in consequence of the expenses incurred.

\* Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*.



In the year 1617-18 a new subscription was opened by the company in London, which reached the enormous sum of £1,600,000. This was designated "the company's second joint-stock."

In 1619 negotiations began between the courts of England and Holland, to adjust the quarrels of the respective East Indian interests of the two nations. It was agreed on all hands that it was disgraceful for allies to carry on a commercial competition which almost amounted to war. Accordingly, on the 17th of July, the terms of this treaty were in brief, according to Bruce, as follows:—"It was stipulated that there should be a mutual amnesty, and a mutual restitution of ships and property; that the pepper trade at Java should be equally divided; that the English should have a free trade at Pullicate, on the Coromandel coast, on paying half the expenses of the garrison; and that of the trade of the Moluccas and Bandas they should enjoy one-third, the Dutch two, paying the charges of the garrisons in the same proportion. Beside these conditions, which regarded their opposite pretensions, the treaty included arrangements for mutual profit and defence. Each company was to furnish ten ships of war, which were not to be sent in the European voyages, but employed in India for mutual protection; and the two nations were to unite their efforts to reduce the duties and exactions of the native governments at the different ports. To superintend the execution of this treaty a council was appointed, to be composed of four members of each company, called the *Council of Defence*."

The same author says—"In consequence of this treaty, by which the English were bound to send a fleet of ten ships to India, a larger fund was this year raised than had been provided for any preceding voyage: £62,490 in the precious metals, and £28,508 in goods, were exported with the fleet. The return was brought back in a single ship, and sold at £108,887."

The result, however, was unfortunate, as the English commissioners of the council of defence reported that unless measures were taken in Europe to check the grasping and aggressive proceedings of Holland, the trade must be abandoned. This impression was taken up in England, but it was impossible just then to do anything for such a purpose.

The commercial proceedings, meanwhile, are described by Mr. Mill, with great brevity, in the following paragraph:—"In 1621-22, they were able to fit out only four ships, supplied with £12,900 in gold and silver, and £6253 in goods; the following year, they sent five ships, £61,600 in money, and £6430

in goods; in 1623-24, they equipped seven vessels, and furnished them with £68,720 in money, and £17,340 in goods. This last was a prosperous year to the domestic exchequer. Five ships arrived from India with cargoes, not of pepper only, but of all the finer spices, of which, notwithstanding the increasing complaints against the Dutch, the company's agents had not been prevented from procuring an assortment. The sale of this part alone of the cargoes amounted to £485,593; that of the Persian raw silk to £97,000; while £80,000, in pursuance of the treaty of 1619, was received as compensation money from the Dutch." This compensation money was, however, given with the greatest reluctance, and its concession deepened the hostility which the Dutch felt, and had so malignantly displayed. Not long after followed the massacre of Amboyna, described in the last chapter.

It may here, however, be observed that the Dutch certainly believed the English guilty of a conspiracy at Amboyna to seize the fort, and some English writers have conceded it. Captain Hamilton\* affirms it, and even palliates, and almost justifies, the severity of the Dutch, by references to alleged tortures, perjuries, and persecutions inflicted by agents of the English company upon other Englishmen, who, not being the servants of the company, were called "interlopers," and proscribed, having been deemed fair game for the company's people to hunt down by any means they could.

Upon the allegations of Captain Hamilton, Professor Wilson, of Oxford, thus animadverted, while he concedes the probability of some English plot:—"It is not impossible that there was amongst the English on Amboyna some wild scheme for the seizure of the island. The Japanese were soldiers of the garrison, and their position rendered their co-operation of an importance more than equivalent to the smallness of their numbers. At the same time, the conspirators were punished with a severity wholly unjustifiable. It is no extenuation of the cruelty of the Dutch, to argue that the English in India, in those days, were guilty of similar atrocities; the fact is not proved, and the probability may be questioned: no instance of such savage barbarity can be quoted against any of the English factories or governments, and particular acts of severity towards deserters and pirates are not to be confounded with the deliberate cruelties of a public body. Even with regard to individual instances, however, the evidence is defective: Hamilton wrote from recollection, according to his own

\* *New Account of the East Indies*, vol. i. p. 362.



admission, and his accusations are, for the most part, general and vague. It is elsewhere noticed by our author, also, that he was an interloper, and that his testimony, when unfavourable to the company, must be received with caution. His assertions cannot be admitted as conclusive or unsuspecting. The conduct of the council of Amboyna admits of no doubt, and no plea of precedent or necessity can be justly heard in its palliation. The Dutch writers themselves acknowledge, that it would have been much better to have sent the accused to Europe for trial, even by the English courts."\*

The proceedings of the company at home assumed but few features of importance up to 1629, when a new charter was obtained. The circumstances which led to it are thus recorded by Mr. Mill, on the authority of Bruce:—"As the sums in gold and silver which the company had for several years found it necessary to export, exceeded the limits to which they were confined by the terms of their charter, they had proceeded annually upon a petition to the king, and a special permission. It was now, however, deemed advisable to apply for a general license, so large as would comprehend the greatest amount which, on any occasion, it would be necessary to send. The sum for which they solicited this permission was £80,000 in silver, and £40,000 in gold; and they recommended, as the best mode of authenticating the privilege, that it should be incorporated in a fresh renewal of their charter; which was accordingly obtained."

During this period, also, the company first petitioned the English House of Commons. Upon the death of King James I., and the ascent to the throne of Charles I., the House of Commons, as is well known to the student of English history, gradually asserted more power and influence, which the company perceiving, brought its claims before it, and urged the straits to which it was reduced by the aggressions of the Dutch.

Among the incidents in the last years of the reign of James were the succession to the company of the right to punish their servants abroad, both by martial and municipal law. This right was granted by the crown without the consent of the commons, or even consulting them. Mr. Mill found among the East India papers, in the State Paper Office, the material for the following paragraph:—"In the year 1624-25 the company's fleet to India consisted of five ships; in 1625-26, it consisted of six ships; and in 1626-27, of seven." In the last of these years we gain

\* *Vies des Gouverneurs Hollandois*, in the *Histoire Générale des Voyages*, xvii. 33.

the knowledge collaterally of one of those most important facts in the company's history, which it has been their sedulous care to preserve concealed, except when some interest, as now, was to be served by the disclosure. Sir Robert Shirley, who had been ambassador at the court of Persia, made application to the king and council to order the East India Company to pay him £2000 as a compensation for his exertions and services in procuring them a trade with Persia. The company, beside denying the pretended services, urged their inability to pay; stating that they had been obliged to contract so large a debt as £200,000; and that their stock had fallen to 20 per cent. discount, shares of £100 selling for no more than £80."

Judging from their own representations, their affairs, commercially, wore at this juncture an unfavourable aspect. They probably, however, presented their case in this dark aspect to elude the payment demanded by Shirley, and to create a public impression that they needed yet more the patronage and favour of government, while they were rendering great services to the nation. Probably no event of the times annoyed the company so much as the demands of King James, and his admiral, the Earl of Buckingham, for share of the prize money won by its successful conflicts with the Portuguese. The king demanded £1000 as droits to the crown; the lord high admiral demanded the like sum as droits to the Admiralty. As the power of the king was often exercised in an unconstitutional manner in those days, the company deemed it discreet simply to raise objections to the demand, and make no farther resistance. To the admiral's claim they presented legal obstacles, and indignant remonstrance and protest. They declared that as their ships which captured prizes did not carry letters of marque from the Admiralty, it had no right to interfere, especially as the armaments by which such captures were made, were a heavy cost to the company, which had to protect its own trade, the state rendering very little assistance. These arguments were good, for if the government in any form made itself a partner in the naval and military successes of the company, it should also take its share in losses that were inflicted by the armed Portuguese and Dutch. The whole matter was brought before the Court of Admiralty, when it appeared that the prizes of the company were to the amount of £100,000 sterling, and 240,000 reals of eight. The unprincipled king, greedy to obtain money, insisted on his prerogative; the claims of the high admiral were postponed and eluded,



and probably eventually baffled, for there is no evidence of their having ever been satisfied.

The first home event of any importance after the royal concession of 1629 was the opening of a subscription for a third joint-stock. This began in 1631, and was completed in the following year. It amounted to £420,000. With the new subscription seven ships were fitted out the same year. In 1633-34 five ships were sent out. In 1634-35 mention is made of only three, but some historians doubt whether that year was not more prolific of enterprise.

The company now complained loudly of the "interlopers:" private adventurers trading to any part of the East on their own account were so considered, and such they were so long as the company held the royal charter. There was, however, a disposition to murmur at the slightest infringement of their privilege unworthy of a body which had already acquired so great an influence, and which carried on such extensive enterprises. But, in truth, the profits of the trade were far less than the public supposed. Most of the directors were ignorant of political economy, and few of their agents had any correct opinions as to the principles of trade. The censure of Mr. Mill applies too truly to the conduct and intelligence of the company at this period as a trading association:—"The company, like other unskilful, and for that reason unprosperous, traders, had always competitors, of one description or another, to whom they ascribed their own want of success. For several years they had spoken with loud condemnation of the clandestine trade carried on by their own servants, whose profit they said exceeded their own. Their alarms for their exclusive privileges had for some time been sounded; and would have been sounded much louder, but for the ascendancy gained by the sentiments of liberty." Their hope that their monopoly would escape the general wreck with which institutions at variance with the spirit of liberty were threatened, could only be entertained if its pretensions were prudently kept in the shade. The controversy whether monopolies, and among others that of the company, were injurious to the wealth and prosperity of the nation, had already employed the press.

The outcry as to the interlopers and private traders was one which troubled the public as well as the company from the beginning of the century, and during the embassy of Sir Thomas Roe he advised the directors to allow no servants to trade, but to give them adequate salaries, and engage their entire interests. The parsimony of the company to the agents compelled them to trade for a sufficient subsistence. The advice of Sir

Thomas had only been in part followed, and hence the complaints to which Mr. Mill, with a tone of some asperity, refers.

In 1634-35 a new and remarkable episode in the history of the company is presented. A treaty was formed with Portugal for freedom of trade between the Eastern possessions of the two countries, and also between the parent states and the respective factories and possessions of each. This event was hailed in England with as much satisfaction as the arrangement with the Dutch previously had been received, and with but little more ground for the hope and confidence inspired. To the company it turned out to be a great danger, for it incited a number of enterprising persons in India to denounce the monopoly of the company, and to attempt the formation of an independent association. At the head of this party was Sir William Courten, who succeeded in engaging a gentleman of the royal bed-chamber, named Endymion Porter, to use his influence with the king on its behalf. The courtier had little difficulty in persuading a monarch so tenacious of his own rights, and so thoughtless of the rights of others, as Charles I. The king was prevailed upon to *take a share*, and then there was no difficulty in obtaining from him, on behalf of the association, licence to trade. The object of the king was personal profit, and yet he had the unfaithfulness and effrontery to set forth in the preamble of the licence, "that it was founded upon the misconduct of the East India Company, who had accomplished nothing for the good of the nation in proportion to the great privileges they had obtained, or even to the funds of which they had disposed." Charles no doubt felt emboldened in the perpetration of this treachery by the opinion of the nation, then hotly engaged in discussing monopolies and the rights of kings. The provision of notice to the company three years before any abrogation of its charter emboldened many to become adventurers under its guarantee; the violation of this compact was worthy of a prince who could keep no faith with his subjects, whether the matters which demanded it were religious, political, or commercial.

Courten's Association, as the newly licensed company was called, persevered, and sent out ships. In 1637-38 several ships of the new company returned home laden with Eastern produce, suitable to the English market, which brought a ready sale and great profit. In consequence of the alarm and petitions of the old company, the privy council came to the conclusion that the two companies should avoid all collision by Courten's Association seeking new ports, and the East India Com-



pany not touching at any place where Courten's people erected a factory. The East India Company prosecuted its protests against all rivalry; the king was so overwhelmed with complaints from all classes of his subjects, except the highest in birth and privilege, that he became extremely solicitous to quell this new tumult, which, like so many others in his reign, he had himself done so much to raise. The privy council were directed to form a committee to investigate and settle matters, and, if possible, conciliate conflicting parties and interests. The council, however, did none of these things—here also perpetrating the neglect, and displaying the folly, which ere long convulsed the nation, and for a time left the throne blood-stained and vacant. Charles was obliged to do something about the company, “to satisfy the noblemen and gentlemen who were adventurers in it,” and, according to Bruce, the licence to Courten was withdrawn. His party complained bitterly that the king had betrayed them, entangling them in undertakings beneath the ægis of his protection, and then in the moment of hope and trial abandoning them.

The affairs of the company now assumed an aspect of confusion which it would be impossible to describe, but their affairs had been conducted with so much disorder, their accounts kept in a manner so complicated and impracticable, the agents abroad had looked so little after the company's property, being taken up with their own barter and exchanges, that it is extraordinary bankruptcy did not immediately ensue. The proprietors of “the third joint-stock” demanded that that particular adventure should be brought to a close, and that its property in India should be brought home. The difficulty of complying with this demand was greater than the aggregate capacity of the directors could accomplish. Mill, quoting Bruce, depicts the conditions of things thus:—“It might have been disputed to whom the immovable property of the company, in houses and lands, in both India and England, acquired by parts indiscriminately, of all the joint-stocks, belonged. Amid the confusion which pervaded all parts of the company's affairs, this question had not begun to be agitated: but to encourage subscription to the new joint-stock, it was laid down as a condition, ‘That to prevent inconvenience and confusion, the old company or adventurers in the third joint-stock should have sufficient time allowed for bringing home their property, and should send no more stock to India, after the month of May.’ It would thus appear that the proprietors of the third joint-stock, and by the same rule the proprietors of all preceding

stocks, were, without any scruple, to be deprived of their share in what is technically called the *dead stock* of the company, though it had been wholly purchased with their money. There was another condition, to which inferences of some importance may be attached; the subscribers to the new stock were themselves, in a general court, to elect the directors to whom the management of the fund should be committed, and to renew that election annually. As this was a new court of directors, entirely belonging to the fourth joint-stock, it seems to follow that the directors in whose hands the third joint-stock had been placed, must still have remained in office, for the winding up of that concern. And, in that case, there existed, to all intents and purposes, two East India Companies, two separate bodies of proprietors, and two separate courts of directors, under one charter. So low, however, was the credit of East India adventure, under joint-stock management, now reduced, that the project of a new subscription almost totally failed. Only the small sum of £22,500 was raised. Upon this a memorial was presented to the king, but in the name of whom—whether of the new subscribers, or the old—whether of the court of directors belonging to the old joint-stock, or of a court of directors chosen for the new, does not appear. It set forth a number of unhappy circumstances, to which was ascribed the distrust which now attended joint-stock adventures in India; and it intimated, but in very general terms, the necessity of encouragement to save that branch of commerce from total destruction.” The failing credit of the company, the alarming ascendancy of the Dutch in the Eastern Archipelago, and the political conflicts at home, all combined to render it impossible to raise a new joint-stock.

In this state of affairs the company incurred a new blow from the king. Having resolved to make war upon his subjects, and not possessing pecuniary resources for the task which he imposed upon himself, the king seized all the pepper of the company, offering to purchase it on credit, which he did, and then immediately sold it for ready money. The parliament was subsequently unwilling to acknowledge any responsibility for this and other acts of the king, and his majesty appears to have given himself no concern as to the repayment. Bruce represents the company as receiving back a portion by remission of customs, but Professor Wilson believes that they never received any compensation. Thus, in every form, Charles I. was perfidious and oppressive to the company. His caprice, selfishness, and



injustice nearly extinguished the existence of a body destined however to live for great achievements. Probably the company would not have survived the plunder of the stores of pepper by the king, had not some of the agents abroad sustained by loans its sinking credit.

The conduct of the king became more and more infatuated, until the fury of the civil war shook every institution in England to its foundation, and the East India Company suffered its full proportion of the disasters which the royal obstinacy and unconstitutional violence entailed upon all. Among the acts of this sovereign which most disturbed public confidence was the seizure of the money lodged in the Tower by the merchants. "Previous to the year 1640, the merchants of London lodged their money in the Mint at the Tower as a place of security. The king's inability to meet the Scottish army, which was then approaching the borders of England, constrained him to call the parliament together, which had not been summoned for twelve years, for the purpose of obtaining supplies. These being refused until their grievances were redressed, parliament was hastily dissolved by the king, who, upon some alleged ground that the City of London had occupied more land in Ireland than was granted by their charter, forcibly borrowed of the merchants £200,000 of their money, then lodged in the Tower. This led the merchants to withdraw their deposits, and to place them in the hands of goldsmiths, whose business till then was to buy and sell plate and foreign coins, and to melt and cause them to coin some at the Mint, and with the rest to supply the refiners, plate-makers, and merchants, as they found the price vary. They became lenders to the king, whose wants led him to anticipate the revenue, and who gave orders or letters on the exchequer for the interest."

Such was the condition of the company's affairs at home that, *a priori*, the reader may conclude affairs abroad, so far as depended upon the management and resources of the company, did not prosper. In the earlier years of the period of which we treat, there were some successes, but these were almost entirely confined to the continent of India, and the neighbouring seas.

The foundation, at Jacatra, of a colony, upon which the Dutch people concentrated their power in that direction, had considerable influence upon the progress of affairs in the eastern Asiatic isles. The Dutch were nearly always at war with the King of Bantam, who was the ally of the English. Several times English interests there appeared upon the point of destruction, and the King of Bantam in peril of the loss of his dominions.

The English settlement was repeatedly attacked, and once burnt down, and the palace of the king partly demolished.

A few months previous to the arrangement of 1619 between the two companies, Sir Thomas Dale combined his forces, of some ships which he commanded, with the forces of the King of Bantam, for the expulsion of the Dutch from Jacatra. This expedition was successful, and the natives of the place undertook its defence. The Javanese soldiers who occupied the place were neither brave nor vigilant, and surrendered upon the next demonstration of the Dutch. This locality was chosen by the latter\* for the foundation of a fortified city, which, after the ancient name of Holland, was called Batavia. That became the great seat and centre of Dutch oriental power and commerce, and continues so to this day. It was at Jacatra, or Batavia, that the council of defence already referred to fixed its quarters, but the victory of the Dutch admiral, Coen, left unfavourable influences, which caused animosity to rankle in the hearts of men of both nations. "The president and council," as the four English representatives constituting the council of defence at Batavia were called, were much dissatisfied that the ships destined for Java and the Spice Islands were detained in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, to the great detriment of the pepper export, but events proved that these ships were more profitably employed than they could have been loading pepper at Batavia or Bantam. In like manner the factories at Sumatra detained ships which were also to have brought away lading from Java, but so uncertain was the conduct of the Dutch, that the factors at Sumatra appear to have had good reason for their conduct. These discontents, however, between the company's agents abroad led to conflicting "advices" in the communications received at home, and embarrassed the directors.

The expiration of the truce between Spain and Holland, in 1621, left the Dutch cruisers once more at liberty to attack Portuguese interests, which they did with an energy that inspired still further desire for a scope to their activity, and the English, contrary to treaty, were also assailed. Dutch writers allege that the English settlers in the Bandas, Poleroon, Rosengin, and Santore conspired with the natives against the legitimate influence of Holland, which claimed a right to the sovereignty of these isles. The admirals and merchants of the states-general were, however, always fancying conspiracies, or inventing them as pretexts for their aggressions. According to the testimony of their apologists,

\* See chapter on the Dutch in India and the East.



just as the English conspiracies were ripe, the opportune arrival of the Dutch admiral, Coen, saved the settlers, and restored the interests of his nation. He inflicted severe punishment both upon the native and English conspirators, effectually protected Batavia, and established it in superior strength, and covered the designs of the English with humiliation.

The English factory at Bantam had been removed to Batavia, on the faith of the treaty of conciliation and partnership between the two companies, concluded in Europe. The English agents now desired to return to their former position, but the Dutch opposed that, on the ground, openly confessed, that it might injure their newly consolidated oriental metropolis, Batavia. Thus it became evident that the Dutch had resolved by force to put an end to the trade of all rivals, and to hold under the cannon's mouth the monopoly of trade in the Eastern Archipelago.

The English trade with Java had now been extinguished, unless carried on to a small extent under restrictions haughtily and insolently imposed. The commerce with Japan became similarly circumstanced. In a former chapter the English were described as obtaining from the emperor charters the most favourable at Firando and Jeddo. The Dutch attacked these places while peace existed between England and the states-general, and the two East India companies were in ostensible partnership. No provocation had been given, no plea of sovereignty was set up, but upon the old pretext of prior occupation, the assault was made with sanguinary violence by an overwhelming force. The English could make no effectual resistance; they had to flee into the interior, where, protected by the natives, they escaped; otherwise they would have shared the fate of their compatriots at Amboyna.

Soon after these misfortunes the company's agents retired from Java to the Island of Lagundy, in the Straits of Sunda. The persons who selected this position were as little skilled in sanitary science as English agents and commanders have generally been since; and the result was a severe mortality, which in twelve months carried off nearly two hundred men. The distress of the settlers was so great, that they could not muster men sufficient in number to work a vessel to bear themselves away to any of the English factories. The Dutch showed some mercy by bringing them away to Batavia. The "Pangram," or King of Bantam, their steady friend, again offered them the means of re-establishing the factory at his capital; this was accomplished in 1629, the Dutch being at that juncture unable to oppose, as the Emperor of Java besieged Batavia with eighty thousand men.

Notwithstanding the difficulties to which the company at home, and its agents abroad, were exposed during this period, attempts were made to open up a trade with China, where, it was believed, if a commerce could be secured, it would render especial profit. From Firando and Tywan the English made repeated attempts to create a Chinese trade, which, considering the infancy of those settlements, reflected credit upon the agents and the commanders of ships.

According to the twenty-sixth article of the treaty of defence, "the two companies were jointly to open a free trade to China." But the policy and proceedings of the rivals were precisely the same on the Chinese coasts as among the Spice Islands. They did not, however, make any pretence of justice in their conduct in the Chinese waters. They had no exclusive privileges or pre-occupation to plead, yet, "neither the treaty, nor the fear of reprisals, nor a sense of the friendship which subsisted between England and the states-general, could restrain the avidity of the Dutch company, or render them equitable to their allies."\* The company established their factories at Tywan and Formosa, with every prospect of working a remunerative trade, and of securing an opening at Amoy. Formosa was an object of their ambition, because of the alleged variety of its produce; and it was reported that English goods brought thither from the Chinese province of Fo-kien, in Chinese junks, sold well. The Chinese were then busy colonizing Formosa, chiefly because of its productiveness in rice; and as Formosa gathered an industrious Chinese population, who worked as its own wild people would not do, a demand for English goods increased.

Efforts were made to procure intercourse with Canton by means of the Portuguese at Macao; but the governor would not allow any English settlers without sanction from Europe. When the English succeeded in gaining access to Canton, it was under provisions which restricted their operations exceedingly; all ships, guns, and ammunition must be sent on shore, and heavy dues and exactions submitted to, which were tantamount to plunder. The Chinese nation was also much disturbed, the minds of men were unsettled, and a predatory and contentious spirit seemed to prevail among the whole people.

As soon as the Dutch found the English seeking a trade, they not only attacked and plundered their ships, but they committed extensive piracy on Chinese junks, sinking and burning the vessels, and slaying their crews,

\* Auber.



proclaiming themselves to be English, and committing these enormities under the flag of England. The result was as they expected—a prejudice against the British was spread all along the coasts of China. It became the habit of the Dutch at that time in every sea, when they wanted to perpetrate a dishonest or violent deed, to hoist English colours, and declare themselves English to their victims.

The court of directors in London had their attention called more especially to the condition and prospects of a Chinese commerce by their agents at Bantam. The following is a curious and interesting *exposé* of the opinions and hopes of the first British essayists in Chinese commerce. It is a document sent by the “presidency” at Bantam in 1622:—

“Concerning the trade of China, two things are especially made known unto the world. The one is, the abundant trade it affordeth; the second is, that they admit no stranger into their country.

“1st. *Question.* Whether the Emperor of China resides near the sea or within the land?

“*Answer.* He resideth within the land, seventy days’ journey from these seas, in a city called Pequín, situate in 48 degrees towards the Tartarian borders, &c.

“2nd. *Quest.* Whether our king might not send to visit him, and whether our king’s people and shipping might not be permitted to have trade, and to pass and repass with safety?

“*Ans.* No people may be admitted to travel within the land; neither will the Emperor admit converse or commerce with any prince or people. In some places that border on the coast or confines of other princes, there is trade tolerated by some inferior governors, yet unknown to the emperor, and those with limitation; for their vessels, if on sea voyages, are proportioned for bigness not to exceed one hundred and fifty tons, their number of men allowed, and their time of absence prescribed. The like strictness is observed in the neighbourly land; commerce being carried on by marts only, held on certain days.”

In the year 1627 the presidency of Bantam referred the court of directors to certain conferences which were opened with intelligent Chinese as to trade between their country and Japan.

In 1635 the president of the English factory of Surat, having been engaged in negotiating with the governor of the Portuguese settlement at Goa for a treaty of peace between the two nations in India, the court of directors expressed the extreme pleasure which such a prospect afforded to them, and their desire, should such a treaty be brought to pass, that advantage should be taken of it for the purpose of facilitating the trade

between India and China. When the treaty was effected, the company renewed the expression of these wishes, and upon the arrival in India of the ratification of the treaty by the King of Spain, the viceroy at Goa proposed to the council at Surat that a ship should be freighted, partly by each company, and sent to Canton. The British ship, *London*, was selected for this purpose. This was the first British ship that sailed from India to Macao: directions were therefore given to be exceedingly scrupulous to create no prejudice in the minds of the Chinese. The ship reached Macao in July, 1635. The governor’s conduct justified the complaints made from Firando and Bantam, that he paid no attention to his superior at Goa, and that the Portuguese in China were in revolt against the Portuguese in India. The functionary at Macao would not allow the supercargoes, either British or Portuguese, to reside on shore, and in all ways, short of direct expulsion, hindered the new trade.

At this juncture the ships of Courten’s Association arrived, and hostilities between them and the servants of the company at once began. The effect upon the Chinese was to lead them to believe that some underhand proceeding, hostile to themselves, was on foot, the spectacle of the ships of the same nation being in hostility appearing to them incomprehensible.

The Dutch, perceiving how matters stood, attacked both Portuguese and British, and for a time there appeared but little chance of the allies resisting the superior force of the ships of the states-general. The Portuguese fought badly, and their want of prowess caused the English to despise them so much that they lost all confidence in any good result from the alliance. The Dutch were, however, defeated in their attempt to conquer Macao, and retired to the Pescadores, where they built a fort, from which to annoy and plunder Chinese, Portuguese, and British indiscriminately.

Having presented to the reader a succinct account of the condition of the company’s interests, and the events which befell them in the earliest sphere of its operations in the Eastern Seas—as the Archipelago and the Chinese waters were called, in contra-distinction to the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea—a new series of events remain to be related in connection with these.

The English, as has been shown in former chapters, obtained, after much difficulty in negotiations, settlements in continental India; and, as has also been shown, there was at the outset great danger to the factories from the hostile rivalry of the Portuguese.



When the English obtained permission to establish a factory at Surat, they found that place a very considerable emporium. It was one of the most ancient in India, for it is mentioned in the *Ramagasee*, a poem of very great antiquity. After the Portuguese discovered the passage by the Cape, it became a place of large export, especially of pearls, diamonds, ambergris, civet musk, gold, silks, cottons, spices, indigo, saltpetre, and fragrant woods. It had, from the time of Mohammedan ascendancy, been a port of embarkation for pilgrims on their way to Mecca, and of debarkation for them on their return from Arabia.

In 1612, when Captain Best obtained permission to establish a factory, he left ten persons, and a stock of £4000 to purchase goods.\* The Dutch, hearing of the English settlement, made arrangements to enter into the competition going on there between the British and Portuguese, but did not arrive until 1617, and then were driven thither by a storm, some of their ships having been wrecked. The English succoured them, and even assisted them in disposing of their cargoes to advantage. This kindness was not generously requited.

The English continued to trade as peaceably at Surat as the jealousies of rival nations allowed, and great hopes were entertained by the residents that the Persian treaty (already referred to) would open up a mine of wealth. In virtue of that treaty the English were permitted to build a factory and a fort at Jask. Accordingly, two ships were sent there in 1621, and found the port blockaded by a Portuguese fleet, consisting of five large ships and fifteen small craft. The English returned to Surat, and informed the president of what he had seen. Two other ships reinforced them, and returned to Jask, where, notwithstanding the great disparity of vessels, the British forced their way in. The Portuguese retired to Ormuz, where they refitted and refreshed, that island having then been in their possession for 120 years. Sailing thence for Jask, they drew up in line of battle, and opened a cannonade upon the English with their large vessels, while the small craft, as in an earlier conflict at Surat, attempted to board; the general result was a decisive victory on the part of the English. The Persians were as pleased as the Indians were at the first English victory at Surat, and proposed to the English an allied expedition to Ormuz, to expel the Portuguese from their long-established depot. The naval portion of the

expedition was furnished by the English, the military part by the Persians, but the whole was under English direction. The naval force of the British was very disproportionate, but the military contingent of the shah was, in English hands, a formidable element of the assailing force. The English had received instructions from their own government not to molest the subjects of the King of Spain, the Stuarts always having a friendly feeling to Roman Catholic princes. The British, however, disobeyed those orders in this case, and carried the Persian forces to Ormuz. The place was assaulted and captured in 1622. The victory was complete; the Portuguese proved themselves inferior even to the Persians in arms, when the latter were well led. The shah took possession of the island, but the English received a fair proportion of the prize, and, moreover, a moiety of the customs of Gombroon was conceded to them. This was of some importance, as the English had already a factory there since 1613. Gombroon was on the mainland, nearly opposite to Ormuz, in longitude 54°45' east, and latitude 27°10' north. The Dutch had established a factory there two years before this event, and their mortification and rage were boundless that the English should be placed "over their heads."

A condition was appended to the grant of the customs at Gombroon; namely, that the English should keep the gulf free of pirates. This they did until 1680, when they failed to perform it, and the privilege was resumed by the shah.

The Dutch, so kindly fostered at Surat as guests, soon returned as competitors. They were better traders than the English, and had larger capital; their habits also were more economical, and the English accused them of carrying on their business and regulating their personal expenditure penuriously. They were, however, hospitable, and lived well; they also paid their servants much better than the London company did, which enabled their agents to give themselves more completely up to advance the interests of their employers. Nevertheless, they conducted their business at less cost; all waste was avoided, no money was "fixed" that could be "kept in hand;" their payments were prompt, and their credit therefore good, and in most of these respects they were very unlike their rivals. The English trade at Surat soon began to suffer, and the company memorialised the government at home against the Dutch, as giving a larger price for Indian commodities, and selling European goods lower than they did. The idea of the company was not that the English trader should

\* The reader will find the fullest and best account of the history of this settlement in a work entitled, *The English in Western India*, being the early history of the factory at Surat, by Philip Anderson.



outbid the Dutch, and undersell them in a fair commercial competition, but that the government at home should use force or diplomacy to rid them of the competitors.

While the British were thus troubled by the Dutch at Surat, the Portuguese made another effort to snatch from the victorious English the renown of their recent achievements. In 1630 the viceroy of Goa received a reinforcement of nine ships and two thousand soldiers; and, backed by this demonstration, opened negotiations with the Mogul for the recovery of the exclusive trade of Surat. Five English ships arrived for trade at that place, and as they entered the port of Swally, the Portuguese attacked them, but were beaten off. The disparity of force was too great for the English to inflict any severe punishment upon their foes, who continued to harass the British squadron, and keep up incessant skirmishes. Finally, by a bold attempt to set fire to the English squadron, the Portuguese hoped to accomplish their purpose. This failed: the English again inflicted chastisement upon the opposing fleet, and landed their goods in safety.

Surat and its immediate vicinity were not the only spots in continental India upon which the English laid a tenacious hold at this juncture. In 1628 they purchased from the *naig*, or chief, of the district, a piece of ground on the Coromandel coast, and the year following built a factory, and fortified it by mounting twelve pieces of cannon, guarded by about a fourth of a military company of "factors and soldiers." This is the first we hear of "soldiers" in the service of the company; their employment is, by most writers, assigned to a later period. It does not, however, appear, from any information extant, whether these soldiers were natives or Europeans.

Fortified factories or forts were now considered necessary to the security of the company's trading stations. Miss Martineau says, "It was the king, Charles I., who had brought the company round to the conviction that they must have forts;" and she assigns the reasons given by the king, in 1635, for granting a licence to a rival company, as the occasion of working this change in their opinion. It may be that the directors at home were influenced to offer their encouragement to the building of forts, in consequence of Charles making their not having done so a pretext for creating another association to trade in the East; but it is remarkable that that society from the outset protested, in the language of Sir Thomas Roe, against forts as a waste of money and incompatible with trade. The agents of the company were, however, convinced of the

importance and essential requirement of fortified positions years before Charles issued the document in question, as their proceedings at Armegam and elsewhere show. Indeed, this authoress places the matter much in this light, when she thus describes the proceedings of the company's agents at this period:—"Piece goods, then in great demand—the delicate muslins and soft cottons of the Deccan—were to be had more easily on the Coromandel coast than on the western, and the company attempted to set up several factories or depots there. We read of four, besides the Madras establishment; but European rivals were hardy, and native governments were harsh, and one after another was given up, or transferred to some safer place—to be again removed. Under these difficulties, men began to talk again of forts. It might be true that garrisons would absorb all the profits of trade; but it was clear that trade could not go on without garrisons. No help was to be had from home. During the civil war there, nobody had any attention to spare for India; and the company's agents must take care of themselves. The forts were an humble enough affair; and the native soldiers who were hired to hold them were armed with anything which came to hand, from bows and arrows to damaged muskets; but the company had now a military front to show, and was pretty sure to be soon called on for evidences of its military quality."

Miss Martineau considers that by these forts "a new institution was fairly established, which annulled the purely pacific character of British settlements in India." Although these remarks of this gifted lady were called forth by the establishment of Fort St. George, in Madras, in 1640, they are not justified by that circumstance. Fort St. George, as well as previous and minor erections of a military nature, were simply defensive. They were no more a symptom of departure from pacific principles and purposes than would be the fact of a quiet citizen procuring a policeman to watch his house when he knew it was an object of assault by thieves. The desires of the English merchants and their agents at this time were "purely pacific."

The reinforcements of the viceroy of Goa placed Ormuz in danger, as that functionary openly boasted of his intention to reconquer it, and to destroy the English factory on the mainland. These boastings proved vain, as the purposes were never executed, the courage of the English and the numbers of the Persians rendering their execution impossible.

The British had established a factory at Masulipatam, but removed it. Subsequently, as they became more anxious for a trade on



the eastern shores of Bengal, negotiations were opened with the King of Golconda, who promised that former grievances should be redressed, and concessions were made of such a nature as induced the company to make Masulipatam again a port of trade. The agents of the company at Agra and Surat prevailed upon the Mogul government to grant permission to open trade at Piplee.\* It was for the better government of these stations, that the station at Bantam was again raised to the rank of a presidency.

A trade in pepper with the Malabar coast was actively prosecuted when the treaty with Portugal was made. This step the company was constrained to take by the difficulty of the island trade, in consequence of the vigilance and armed power of the Dutch.

One of the most, perhaps the most, important of the proceedings of the company's foreign agents was the occupation of Fort St. George, at Madras. This arose from the inconvenience of Armegant† for the chief articles of exportation from the coast of Coromandel—muslin and other wove goods. The Rajah of Chandragiri granted, March 1st, 1639,‡ permission to have a factory at Madras to the company's agent, Mr. Day, who, as the English were then trading with arms in their hands, immediately began to erect a fort, which was called St. George. The directors in London heard of these proceedings with alarm, but the directors of the factory at Surat prevented them from abandoning it; and thus was founded a place which became the capital of a great presidency, larger than the dominions of all the powers which at that time traded and quarrelled around the peninsula, upon so prominent a position of which it stood. The station was at once placed under the supervision of the president at Bantam. The force in Fort St. George was merely nominal; had an attack been made by either Portuguese or Dutch, it must have fallen. Its chief defence was the goodwill of the rajah.§ The territory granted extended five miles along the shore, and one inland.

\* Montgomery Martin alleges it to be Piplee, in Orissa, twenty-seven miles from Cuttack, and in lat. 20°5' north, long. 85°58'. Mr. Walter Hamilton, Professor Wilson, and others, affirm that it was Piplee, in Midnapore, twenty-eight miles E.N.E. from Balasore, lat. 21°42' north, long. 87°20' E. At this latter place the Dutch traded, exporting, according to Mr. Hamilton, two thousand tons of salt annually. This writer represents the removal of the merchants to Balasore subsequently as in consequence of floods deluging the town, and forming a bar in the river.

† Madras was nearly seventy miles south of Armegant.

‡ Miss Martineau, Mr. Martin, and others, allege that it was in 1640.

§ In the geographical part of the work the reader will find minute and correct descriptions of the present condition of the city and presidency of Madras.

The expenditure upon the fort was considerable for the times; in 1644 it amounted to £2294, and it was calculated that as much more would be requisite. In that year it was deemed politic to render it impregnable, and for that purpose one hundred soldiers were assigned to it, but these were from time to time reduced.

The apprehensions of the company that Madras was not suitable as a station for trade, were not altogether ill-founded. As a port it is deficient in convenience, for the reasons assigned in the geographical portion of this history when describing it. At a period long after its establishment, a writer competent to pronounce an opinion observed:—"Owing to the want of a secure port and navigable rivers, the commerce of Madras is inferior to that of the other presidencies, but all sorts of European and Asiatic commodities are procurable. Besides the disadvantages above mentioned, the Carnatic province considered generally is sterile compared with that of Bengal, and raises none of the staple articles of that province in such quantities, and at so low a price, as to admit of competition in foreign markets. Provisions are neither of so good a quality nor so cheap as in Bengal. The water is of a very good quality, and supplied to ships in native boats at established prices."\* The same writer, describing the vicinity, thus writes:—"In the neighbourhood of Madras, the soil, when well cultivated, produces a good crop of rice, provided in the wet season the usual quantity of rain falls, and in some places the industry of the natives by irrigation creates a pleasing verdure. The fields yield two crops of rice annually. In appearance the country is almost as level as Bengal, and in general exhibits a naked, brown, dirty plain, with few villages, or any relief for the eye, except a range of abrupt detached hills towards the south."

An event of still more consequence than the concessions of "Sree Runga, Rayapatam," to Mr. Francis Day, enabling the latter to build Fort George, occurred about this time—the establishment of the settlement of Hoogly. The circumstances which led to this event are better known than the precise date of it. These circumstances were as follow. Shah Jehan, the great Mogul, had a favourite daughter, named Jehanara: on one occasion, after spending the evening with her sire, when retiring to her own apartments, she passed too closely to one of the lamps that lit a corridor of the palace, and set her dress on fire. Fearful of calling the attention of the guards—

\* *Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of Hindostan, and the Adjacent Countries.* By Walter Hamilton. London, 1820.



oriental ladies of her rank regarding any exposure to the gaze of strangers as a calamity to be avoided at whatever cost—she rushed to the harem, her light apparel in flames, which the rapidity of her flight of course fanned. She fell insensible into the arms of her attendants, who extinguished the fire, but the princess was severely and even perilously injured. The emperor summoned the chief physicians from every part of his wide dominions, but they did not succeed in affording such succour as gave hope of her final recovery. The surgeons of the English East Indianmen were then thought of by the emperor himself, who, sending to Surat, one Gabriel Boughton hastened to obey his commands. The result of his skill and counsel was, the restoration of the royal lady, and the boundless gratitude, not only of herself, but of her sire and of the court. The emperor offered to his benefactor any reward he might choose to name within the limits of the imperial power to bestow. The noble Englishman thought only of his country, and demanded for it freedom of trade in every part of the empire, then confined to a few places, and chiefly to Surat. The princess, charmed with the disinterestedness of the *medicus*, joined her entreaties to his request, and the emperor equally surprised, and admiring the patriotism and generosity of the man, conceded the boon. It appears that Boughton about the same time rendered valuable services to Prince Shuga, the governor of Bengal, and in this case thought also of his country rather than of himself. The practical consequences of these providential incidents were that Shuga, with the consent and pleasure of the emperor, issued a *neshan*, or order with warrants from the local governors, for the English to trade free in all ports of his imperial majesty, and to be exempt from all duties, except at Surat, with general permission to erect factories.

The English took immediate advantage of this, and settled a factory at Hoogly, which laid the foundation of their subsequent commerce and empire in Bengal. The precise dates of these events, as well as the modes of their occurrence, have been more discussed than most others in English East India history.

The Portuguese had previously had a factory at Hoogly, and were expelled thence. The date of their expulsion has been generally fixed at 1636; by some writers, however, in 1640; and by others, fewer in number, at a later period. As the English did not enter into possession of Hoogly until some time after the Portuguese had been driven out, the date of the one event is dependent upon the other. Stewart, in his *History of Bengal*,

says that Boughton was sent to the imperial camp in 1636, and that factories were founded in Balasore and Hoogly four years after. Bruce, in his *Annals of the East India Company, from 1600 to the Union of the London and English Companies in 1707-8*, affirms that the factory was not established in Hoogly for eleven or twelve years after the period assigned by Stewart, and that the visit of Surgeon Boughton to Surat was in 1645. Mr. Mill assigns to it so late a date as 1651-52. Professor Wilson leans to the opinion of Bruce, and thinks that Stewart confounded the permission given to Mr. Day to trade at Piplce, in Orissa, with the *neshan* given to Boughton for a general free trade in Bengal. The same learned historical critic observes—"An attempt was made to establish a factory at Patna in 1620. In 1624 a firman was obtained from Shah Jehan, permitting the English to trade with Bengal, but restricting them to the port of Piplce in Midnapore, but the regular connection of the company with Bengal did not commence until 1642, when a factory was established by Mr. Day, at Balasore."

According to Mr. Mill the concession of privilege to the English for a general free trade was not as gratefully imparted by the emperor and the governor of Bengal as their professions of obligation to Mr. Boughton might have led him to suppose would be the case; for a sum of three thousand rupees was required as a bonus. This was the ostensible sum then paid, but before a firman was issued by the emperor, which was not until the reign of Aurungzebe, much more had to be expended upon the corrupt imperial officers, to remove their opposition or purchase their support.

The erection of the English factory at Hoogly was of great importance, not only to the destinies of India, but to the immediate interests of the East India Company. It appears, however, that much embarrassment was experienced from the local authorities, notwithstanding the nominal freedom conceded to the settlers. Mr. Walter Hamilton says, "The Dutch in 1625, and the English in 1640, were permitted to build factories at this place, but their trade was greatly restricted, and subjected to continual exactions."

The way in which Dr. Cook Taylor sets forth the conduct of Mr. Boughton is not so honourable to the British surgeon as all other writers depict it. Dr. Taylor seems to have been misled by the payment of the three thousand rupees, which were not paid to Mr. Boughton for his use, but which went to the governor of Bengal, and the creatures around him, or as some writers opine to the emperor himself



The learned doctor thus puts the transaction:—"In 1636, an English physician, Dr. Boughton, accompanied the British envoy from the factory at Surat to Agra, where the emperor, Shah Jehan, was stationed. The favourite daughter of the shah was cured of a dangerous illness by the skill of Dr. Boughton; the shah, from gratitude, granted to him the right of free trade over the empire. This right the doctor sold to the company, who made use of it by establishing a new factory on the banks of the Hoogly, on a spot convenient for their shipping. This was the foundation of Calcutta."

Dr. Taylor affirms too much when he

represents the settlement at Hoogly as "the foundation" of Calcutta, which he describes as not settled for long after, Fort William having been built in 1697-98. It is true that the town of Hoogly, being on the Hoogly river, the establishment of a factory in that city led to the consolidation of a commerce upon that stream, and in that part of Bengal, otherwise Calcutta would never have been selected; but other events, and many sequences flowing from them, contributed to the causes and the occasion of a factory at Calcutta, and the erection of a great monument of English energy, power, and perseverance there—Fort William.

## CHAPTER LI.

### HOME HISTORY OF THE COMPANY, FROM THE CIVIL WAR IN ENGLAND TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

IN another chapter\* a brief outline was given of the history of the East India Company as a government, describing the dates of its different charters, and the terms in which they were granted. This circumstance will enable the author to convey with more brevity the home history of the company.

When Charles I., after governing the country as long as he dared without a parliament, summoned one to Westminster, the result, as every reader of English history is aware, was violent discussion between the house and the senate, which issued in an appeal to arms, the impeachment and execution of the monarch, the protectorship of Cromwell, the incapacity of a successor, a reaction against freedom, the restoration, and the gay, flippant, and corrupt despotism of Charles II. In all these events which so rapidly and violently passed over England, there were a strange action and reaction of influence from the ruler upon the people, and the people upon the ruler. "The leading journal," with its usual knowledge of human nature, and of English human nature more especially, sagaciously observed in an article written in 1858:—"A king must always be a great man; the personage whom millions regard with admiration, respect, or curiosity, must end by instilling something of his own temper into his subjects and his age. Servants catch the tricks of their masters, wives get the look and voice and turns of expression which belong to their husbands, young ensigns become duplicates of the major in command, and barristers of one year's standing

have already unconsciously assumed the tone and diction of the silk gown. Although the Englishman is of a stubborn and impassive nature, and may live twenty years in a foreign country without losing much of what he brought with him or acquiring much from the people he is among, yet hardly a monarch has reigned in England who has not moulded society into something like his own image. Those who come into contact with royalty have been gallant cavaliers, tasteful in dress and decoration, but bigoted and insolent withal, under Charles I., reckless and profligate under his son, wavering in their faith under James, with a return to Protestant and patriotic sentiments when William and Mary were installed. The four Georges in succession might have seen their very various characters reflected in the mirror of contemporary English life. Happy it is for this country that the power has gone no further, and that royal personages have been limited to an influence on the prevailing manners of the day."

The East India Company, in the whole course of its history, exemplified the philosophical soundness of these remarks. What writers regard as a policy unaccountably changeful and contradictory may be explained by the influence, upon the minds of the directors and agents, of the changeful moral and political fashions of the times, created by the predominance of prominent public men. The peculiar characters of these men were, to a great extent, fashioned out of the opinions, habits and temper of the sects, and

\* Chapter xiii.

parties into which a bold and free discussion necessarily divided the nation; while all schools of philosophy, political parties, and churches were passing through the ordeal to which free examination and free speech exposed them. Nevertheless, the English nation manifested its idiosyncrasies strongly amidst all the rapid vicissitudes of religion and politics, and the changeful currents of fashion, whether set by kings or enforced by sects. The geographical position of England, as well as the ethnological elements in the nation, account for this. The journal before quoted, when showing how much more the character of a German state depended upon the character of its prince than did that of the western nations of Europe, especially Great Britain, thus clearly and cleverly put this truth:—"The British Isles, or France, or Spain may claim to be nations independently of any government or dynasty. They are marked out by the hand of nature as separate portions of the globe, and their geographical formation has tended more and more to give them unity in themselves and dissimilarity from their neighbours. No individual, or family, or class can say that he or they keep England together, and that without such help there would be no longer a country or a position in Europe for the inhabitants of these islands. The nation remains one by its own coherence and vitality; its institutions may have done much to bring about this result; the personal character of the sovereigns may have done much; but now the work is complete, and the nation is independent of any such extraneous aid."

Before the English nation reached this high state of civilization (if even yet it has altogether attained it), a bold independence and hardihood of thought were perpetually struggling with the dominancy of fashion, and sometimes triumphing over court and aristocracy; asserting itself powerfully, and forming the spirit of the age. This explains much of the pertinacity of the company, conquering all assailants and holding its position against commercial losses, foreign rivalry, the superior naval or military resources of foreign enemies, the perfidy of kings and cabinets at home, and even unpopularity with the merchants and citizens, who were constitutionally jealous of monopolies, and of the growing power of a sort of *imperium in imperio* so far as colonies and commerce were concerned.

During the civil wars comparatively little could be undertaken either in the way of new enterprise or in the consolidation of old plans and performances. The company was itself tossed about on the great agitated sea

of revolution, as roundhead and cavalier swept over the land, and

"With fetlock deep in blood,  
The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,  
Dash'd the hot war-horse on."

The affairs of the company were disturbed and endangered. Commerce fled appalled as the rude blast of the trumpet summoned citizens to arms, or proclaimed that Englishmen had conquered Englishmen on some ensanguined field, or in some city's breach choked with the slaughter of a cruel fratricide. It is not surprising, therefore, if for a long season the affairs of the company at home presented little interest, and the dealings of the company abroad little profit.

Before proceeding to the narration of particular events, it is desirable to present the general aspect of the company's oriental relations. The distractions caused by the great civil war in England left its remote foreign commerce comparatively unprotected; and the Dutch were enabled to maintain a career of triumph in which the flag of England was insulted, and the property of her merchants, to a vast amount, destroyed. Whenever the Dutch made treaties or conventions with any native prince, it was a *sine quâ non* that such prince should stipulate never to admit any other foreigners to trade in his dominions. Even when, in 1660, the Dutch sea and land forces conquered Macassar from the native prince and allied Portuguese, the conqueror was not content with securing a treaty for the perpetual exclusion of the Portuguese and of the Jesuits, against whom the expedition was chiefly intended, but also of all other nations, European and oriental, but more especially the English. This illiberal policy was prejudicial to British interests, and made it necessary to regard the Dutch as enemies alike in peace and war, so far as the great theatre of Eastern rivalry was concerned.

During the administration of the Commonwealth, however, the Dutch were made bitterly to feel the superior power of the British, especially when they had a man of genius, like Oliver Cromwell, at their head. The reparation demanded and compelled, to the relatives of those who perished at Amboyna, and for the losses which British merchants had undergone, was nearly two and three quarter millions sterling.\* Scarcely had the Protector passed away from life, when the Dutch, encouraged by the state of England, renewed their attacks upon English merchants in the East. These, although appearing to be

\* See chapter on the Dutch in India.



desultory, fitful, and capricious, were systematic; opportunities and pretences being patiently and vigilantly waited for, and promptly and cunningly used. Sometimes the Portuguese and British were sufferers together. This was especially the case during the restoration of Charles II. and the reign of James II. The Danes were also sufferers from Dutch cupidity during this period, and they were repeatedly fellow sufferers with the British. The ejection of both by the Dutch from Bantam, in the year 1683, when they pretended the authority of the king for the treachery and violence which they practised, exemplifies this.\* And although both the Danes and British continued to retain factories in Bantam for about nine years longer, yet they were subjected to so many oppressions and so much insolence, that both powers were obliged to abandon their footing on the west coasts of Java.

This general outline of the company's difficulties abroad, through a long course of years, will, without introducing detail in this place, enable the reader to perceive the motives, and comprehend the spirit, of the company in many of its domestic movements, which have obtained from many historians an undeserved censure, or at all events, censure in an undeserved degree.

While yet the trade languished, the necessities of the state and the caution of the citizens checking commercial adventure, the company made desperate exertions to raise funds. Mr. Mill, who takes his statements altogether from Bruce in these descriptions, thus represents the struggle:—"An effort was made in 1642-43 to aid the weakness of the the fourth joint-stock by a new subscription. The sum produced was £105,000; but whether including or not including the previous subscription does not appear. This was deemed no more than what was requisite for a single voyage: of which the company thought the real circumstances might be concealed under a new name. They called it the 'first general voyage.' Of the amount, however, of the ships, or the distribution of the funds, there is no information on record. For several years from this date, no account whatever is preserved of the annual equipments of the company. It would appear, from instructions to the agents abroad, that, each year, funds had been supplied; but from what source is altogether unknown. The instructions sufficiently indicate that they were small; and for this the unsettled state of the country, and the distrust of Indian adventure, will sufficiently account."

\* See chapter on the Dutch in India.

A new danger now arose to the company. The ever wary Dutch, perceiving that the English profited by their peaceable relations with Portugal, and by the convention with the viceroy of Goa for mutual amity and protection, exerted themselves to induce the Portuguese to come to similar terms with them. The latter had experienced so many reverses from the Hollanders, that while distrusting their intentions, they deemed it unwise to reject their overtures, and provoke so great a power. The Dutch probably never meant to keep the agreement; nor did the Portuguese, except so far as fear of the ships of the states-general might ensure their steadiness; at all events, both repeatedly violated the stipulations; and in this respect the Dutch, in very wantonness of power, often did so when by observing the agreement their especial ends might have been honourably attained, or their general interests in the East as effectually promoted.

The Portuguese did not concede any advantages to the states-general which had not been already conceded to the English, but the latter felt it to be very detrimental to them to be obliged to meet the Dutch on equal terms where the Portuguese had settlements. Mr. Mill condemns, or rather sneers, at this querulous disposition, and apprehension of competition on the part of the British East India Company. But it is to be remembered that the Dutch company had a large capital, was supported by the general voice of the states, and well backed and abetted by their government, which had no interests distinct from the nation; while the English company was hampered for want of capital; embarrassed by its various separate joint-stock ventures; regarded with distrust as to its constitution by political economists and roundheads; despised by the cavaliers, and regarded as a suitable object of plunder by the despicable Stuarts. Under such circumstances the company could not afford to encounter any further competition; and hence regarded the Dutch and Portuguese convention at Goa with intense alarm, memorialising their government, and appealing to the patriotism of the English people. Neither memorials nor appeals availed them much at that time; while the Dutch with dogged and pertinacious assiduity worked on, and still chased and plundered every English ship when the inferior force of the latter encouraged the attempt.

The success of the parliamentarians against the absolute monarchists gave an impetus to the national ardour and self-reliance, of which the company resolved to take advantage. Bruce gives the history of their effort to do



so, and describes the complicated financial affairs of the company at this juncture with fidelity and accuracy:—"In 1647-48, when the power of the parliament was supreme, and the king a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, a new subscription was undertaken, and a pretty obvious policy was pursued. Endeavours were used to get as many as possible of the members of parliament to subscribe. If the members of the ruling body had a personal interest in the gains of the company, its privileges would not fail to be both protected and enlarged. An advertisement, which fixed the time beyond which ordinary subscribers would not be received, added, that, in deference to members of parliament, a further period would be allowed to them, to consider the subject, and make their subscriptions. It appears not that any success attended this effort; and in 1649-50, the project of completing the fourth joint-stock was renewed, partly as a foundation for an application to the council of state, partly in hopes that the favours expected from the council would induce the public to subscribe. In the memorial, presented on this occasion to the ruling powers, Courten's Association was the principal subject of complaint. The consent of the king, in 1639, to withdraw the licence granted to those rivals, had not been carried into effect; nor had the condition on which it had been accorded, that of raising a respectable joint-stock, been fulfilled. The destruction, however, to which the association of Courten saw themselves at that time condemned, deprived them of the spirit of enterprise: with the spirit of enterprise, the spirit of vigilance naturally disappeared; their proceedings, from the time of this condemnation, had been feeble and unprosperous: but their existence was a grievance in the eyes of the company; and an application which they had recently made for permission to form a settlement on the Island of Assada, near Madagascar, kindled anew the company's jealousies and fears. What the council proposed to both parties was, an agreement. But the Assada Merchants, so Courten's Association were now denominated, regarded joint-stock management with so much aversion, that, low as the condition was to which they had fallen, they preferred a separate trade on their own funds to incorporation with the company. To prove, however, their desire of accommodation, they proposed certain terms, on which they would submit to forego the separate management of their own affairs. Objections were offered on the part of the company; but, after some discussion, a union was effected, nearly on the terms which the Assada Merchants proposed. Application was then made

for an act to confirm and regulate the trade. The parliament passed a resolution, directing it to be carried on by a joint-stock, but suspending for the present all further decision on the company's affairs. A stock was formed, which, from the union recently accomplished, was denominated *the united joint-stock*; but in what manner raised, or how great the sum, is not disclosed. All we know for certain is, that two ships were fitted out in this season, and that they carried bullion with them to the amount of £60,000. The extreme inconvenience and embarrassment which arose from the management, by the same agents, in the same trade, of a number of separate capitals, belonging to separate associations, began now to make themselves seriously and formidably felt. From each of the presidencies complaints arrived of the difficulties, or rather the impossibilities, which they were required to surmount; and it was urgently recommended to obtain, if it were practicable, an act of parliament to combine the whole of these separate stocks. Under this confusion, we have hardly any information respecting the internal transactions of the company at home. We know not so much as how the courts of directors were formed; whether there was a body of directors for each separate fund, or only one body for the whole; and if only one court of directors, whether they were chosen by the voices of the contributors to all the separate stocks, or the contributors to one only; whether, when a court of proprietors was held, the owners of all the separate funds met in one body, or the owners of each separate fund met by themselves, for the regulation of their own particular concern."

The conduct of the Dutch in the East becoming intolerable, Cromwell took them in hand, and soon reduced them to the condition of suppliants. Great in his naval conceptions—as he was great in every thing—his plans, after the declaration of war against the states-general, were comprehensive, as their execution was vigorous and prompt; and the power of Holland, so recently rampant, bowed before the lion-hearted man, who made his country's name a terror to her foes all over Europe. Not only were the Dutch forced to compensate such Englishmen as suffered through their rapacity and violence, but they were compelled, on meeting any British men-of-war in the channel, to "lower their flag and yards." It must be admitted, however, that the Dutch managed the diplomatic part of the negotiations with skill, so as to evade, under one pretence or another, and by dexterously setting off one clause of the treaty against another, the payment of much that



the British believed themselves entitled to demand. These arts of the Dutch were promoted by the stern integrity with which Cromwell's commissioners examined the claims of the British East India Company. They showed no favour, but dealt with a rigid equity between the demands for compensation made by both companies. Cromwell's commissioners were prejudiced against the company; they were, like their chief, opposed to all monopolies, commercial or ecclesiastical; and they did not insist upon compliance with demands made by the company, with the correctness or principle of which they were far from being satisfied.

In 1654 the body of merchants to whom the joint-stock belonged, including the Assada Merchants, presented two petitions to the council of state, in which they prayed that the East India Company should no longer proceed upon the principle of a joint-stock trade, but that the owners of the separate funds should be empowered to employ them as they pleased. Bruce, and Mill, who follows him, commend the arguments of these proprietors of stock, and infer that the men who then opposed the proceedings and policy of the company entertained sound views of political economy. The petitioners obtained the name of Merchant Adventurers, and their memorials and statements had great weight with the public. The petitions were remitted by the committee of the council of state to the Protector and his council, who showed their opinion in a very practical way, by issuing a decree to the Merchant Adventurers, giving them permission to fit out four ships for the India trade, under the management of a committee.

The consternation of the company at this concession to free trade was great, but it was far less than that of the Dutch East India Company, who feared the abolition of all monopolies, if once the Protector declared himself in favour of the Merchant Adventurers.

"Meanwhile the company, as well as the Merchant Adventurers, were employed in the equipment of a fleet. The petition of the company to the Protector for leave to export bullion, specified the sum of £15,000, and the fleet consisted of three ships. They continued to press the government for a decision in favour of their exclusive privileges; and in a petition which they presented in October, 1656, affirmed that the great number of ships sent by individuals under licences had raised the price of India goods from forty to fifty per cent., and reduced that of English commodities in the same proportion. The council resolved at last to come to a decision. After

some inquiry, they gave it as their advice to the Protector to continue the exclusive trade and the joint-stock; and a committee of the council was, in consequence, appointed to consider the terms of a charter."\*

The decision of the council was generally understood to be contrary to the opinion of Cromwell himself, of Milton, and several other of the most eminent politicians of the day; but the Lord Protector deemed it constitutional to act upon the advice of his council in such a case, and the charter was granted in 1657. Much doubt has been thrown, from time to time, upon the concession of a charter by Cromwell. No record exists of it in any state papers, or in the archives of the India Office. Mr. Mill doubts if it ever had an existence. In a work published in 1855,† edited by a competent authority, purporting to be a statement of the laws relating to India, no mention is made of this charter. Bruce, however, the careful annalist of the company, affirmed its existence in these terms:—"That the charter was granted in this season will appear from the reference made to it in the petition of the East India Company, though no copy of it can be discovered among the records of the state or of the company."‡ Professor Wilson confirms the opinion of Bruce by the following statement:—"In a letter from Fort St. George to the factory at Surat, dated 12th July, 1658, it is stated that the *Blackmoore*, which had arrived from England on the 12th of June, had 'posted away with all haste, after his highness the Lord Protector had signed the company's charter.'"§

The decision of the Protector's council left no hope of separate action to the Merchant Adventurers. Had no fresh charter been granted, it is evident from the talent and energy of these men that they would have persevered in their projects. As matters were, they deemed it discreet to coalesce with the company. A new subscription was opened, which realized £786,000. After much trouble and difficulty matters were adjusted, but not to the perfect satisfaction of all parties, and various arrangements for the factories and stations where trade was conducted were agreed upon—these will be referred to when relating the foreign transactions of the period.

Considerable spirit was now evinced in

\* Anderson's *History of Commerce*; M'Pherson's *Annals*.

† *The Law relating to India and the East India Company*. London: Allen and Co., Leadenhall Street.

‡ Bruce, vol. i. pp. 329, 330.

§ Wilson's *Notes on Mill's History of British India*, lib. i. cap. iv.



fitting out expeditions. The first fleet consisted of five ships; one for Madras, carrying £15,000 in bullion, one for Bengal, one for Bantam, and the other two for Surat and Persia.

The new joint-stock did not flourish any more than its predecessors. A careful writer thus describes the company's affairs:—"The embarrassed state of the company's funds at this particular period may be inferred from the resolutions they had taken to relinquish many of their out-stations, and to limit their trade in the peninsula of India to the presidencies of Fort St. George, Surat, and their subordinate factories." \* For the history of the company at home, from 1661 to 1668, almost the only authorities are Bruce, Anderson's *History of Commerce*, and M'Pherson's *Annals*. Mr. Mill quotes them, and sums up in his own way the information diffused by them over a much wider space:—"Meanwhile Cromwell had died, and Charles II. ascended the throne. Amid the arrangements which took place between England and the continental powers, the company were careful to press on the attention of government a list of grievances, which they represented themselves as still enduring at the hands of the Dutch; and an order was obtained, empowering them to take possession of the Island of Polaroon. They afterwards complained that it was delivered to them in such a state of prepared desolation as to be of no value. The truth is, it was of little value at best. On every change in the government of the country, it had been an important object with the company to obtain a confirmation of their exclusive privileges. The usual policy was not neglected on the accession of Charles II.; and a petition was presented to him for a renewal of the East India charter. As there appears not to have been, at that time, any body of opponents to make interest or importunity for a contrary measure, it was far easier to grant without inquiry than to inquire and refuse; and Charles and his ministers had a predilection for easy rules of government. A charter, bearing date the 3rd of April, 1661, was accordingly granted, confirming the ancient privileges of the company, and vesting in them authority to make peace and war with any prince or people, not being Christians; and to seize unlicensed persons within their limits, and send them to England. The two last were important privileges; and, with the right of administering justice, consigned almost all the powers of government to the discretion of the directors and their servants. It appears not that, on this occasion, the expedient of a new subscrip-

tion for obtaining a capital was attempted. A new adjustment with regard to the privileges and dead stock in India would have been required. The joint-stock was not as yet a definite and invariable sum, placed beyond the power of resumption, at the disposal of the company, the shares only transferable by purchase and sale in the market. The capital was variable and fluctuating; formed by the sums which, on the occasion of each voyage, the individuals, who were free of the company, chose to pay into the hands of the directors, receiving credit for the amount in the company's books, and proportional dividends on the profits of the voyage. Of this stock £500 entitled a proprietor to a vote in the general courts; and the shares were transferable, even to such as were not free of the company, upon paying £5 for admission. Of the amount either of the shipping or stock of the first voyage upon the renewed charter we have no account; but the instructions sent to India prescribed a reduction of the circle of trade. In the following year, 1662-63, two ships sailed for Surat, with a cargo in goods and bullion amounting to £65,000, of which it would appear that £28,300 was consigned to Fort St. George. Next season there is no account of equipments. In 1664-65, two ships were sent out with the very limited value of £16,000. The following season, the same number only of ships was equipped; and the value in money and goods consigned to Surat was £20,600; whether any thing in addition was afforded to Fort St. George does not appear; there was no consignment to Bantam. In 1666-67 the equipment seems to have consisted but of one vessel, consigned to Surat with a value of £16,000."

In 1666 an altercation between the two houses of parliament arose out of the zeal of the company to put down all interlopers. Frederick Skinner, an agent of the Merchant Adventurers previous to their junction with the company, formed a settlement at Jambi, a district on the east coast of Sumatra. It appears he bought the Island of Barella from the Sultan of Jambi, and in those places conducted some trade. He was succeeded by his brother, Thomas Skinner, who either supposed he had a personal right in the property, or thought he would take advantage of the troubles of the times, both in Europe and Asia, and keep unlawful possession, it does not appear which. When the Merchant Adventurers united with the company, Skinner was ordered to hand over the stock and the accounts to the company's agents, which he refused, claiming them as his own. The agents of the company in India seized his

\* Bruce.



ship, merchandise, house, and the Island of Barella; and, refusing him a passage to Europe, he was compelled to travel overland at a great cost. He presented his complaint to the government of Charles II. With the unhappy knack which that monarch's advisers possessed of turning every incident, however remote from politics, into a political embroglio unfortunate to their king, they, after much palpable neglect, handed the matter over to a committee of the council; who, indisposed to take trouble about it, it was referred to the House of Peers. The peers ordered the company to answer the charges; which denied the jurisdiction of their lordships, "affirming that their lordships' house was a court of appeal, and not of trial in the first instance. The lords overruled the objection, and the company threw themselves upon the protection of the commons. The lords, angry at this slight to their authority, proceeded to adjudge by default, and awarded £5000 to Mr. Skinner. The commons imprisoned Skinner. The lords, in reprisal, incarcerated Sir S. Barnardson and three other directors of the company. The two houses were committed to "the great Skinner controversy." The king adjourned the parliament seven times, in the hope that the contest would cool during the recess, but that result was not obtained. The "merrie monarch" found it not at all amusing to quell a parliamentary conflict. At last the king sent for both houses to Whitehall, and by personal persuasion, in which he showed more ability and address than men generally gave him credit for, he succeeded in inducing both houses to erase their resolutions and abandon the subject. The contest was thus ended, and Skinner was ruined. "The sacrifice and ruin of an individual," says Mr. Mill, "appeared, as usual, of little importance: Skinner had no redress."

A war with Holland in 1664, and a temporary quarrel with France the year following, greatly disturbed the company's affairs.

In the year 1664 the French formed an East India Company, which alarmed the English company much more than a war with France would have done. The English court, however, seemed more interested in the welfare of France than of England, and the company did not dare to appeal to the king to use his endeavours against the French, as they importuned him to be hostile to the Dutch. They, however, sent out agents to the East with instructions to oppose the French, and to show them no favour, notwithstanding the partiality of the court in their behalf.

The Danish company, which was formed

about 1650, was also active at this juncture, adding fresh fuel to the fire of anxieties and fears which tormented the British company.

Considerable discussion existed in England, both among the friends and opponents of the company, as to the necessity of the great expenses incurred by factories. These expenses pressed heavily upon the company's resources, and led many to believe that the plan of building forts and factories was bad, and that the advice of Sir Thomas Roe ought to have been followed from the first. Many historians and political economists at the present day are also of this opinion; but Dr. Wilson\* answers them well in the following terms:—"It is very unlikely that any such results would have taken place, or that a trade with India would have been formed, or if formed, would have been perpetuated by any other means than those actually adopted. The Portuguese and Dutch had territorial possessions and fortified factories; and without similar support, it would have been impossible for the English to have participated in the profits of the commerce of the East. Even with these resources, the Dutch succeeded in expelling the English from the Archipelago; and it is very little probable that they would have suffered a single English adventurer to carry on a trade with any part of India from whence they could so easily exclude him. Principles of individual adventure and free competition would have availed but little against the power and jealousy of our rivals; and it was necessary to meet them on equal terms, or to abandon the attempt. But it was not only against European violence that it was necessary to be armed; the political state of India rendered the same precautions indispensable. What would become of 'individual adventure' at Surat, when it was pillaged by the Mahrattas? And what would have been the fate of the English commerce with Madras and Bengal, on the repeated occasions on which it was menaced with extinction, by the rapacity and vindictiveness of the native princes? Had, therefore, the anti-monopoly doctrines been more popular in those days than they were, it is very certain that the attempt to carry them into effect would have deprived England of all share in the trade with India, and cut off for ever one main source of her commercial prosperity. It is equally certain that without the existence of such factories as were 'the natural offspring of a joint-stock;' without the ample resources of a numerous and wealthy association; and without the continuous and vigorous efforts of a corporate body animated by the

\* *History of British India.* By Mill and Wilson. lib. i. cap. iv.



enjoyment of valuable privileges, and the hope of perpetuating their possession by services rendered to the state, we should never have acquired political power in India, or reared a mighty empire upon the foundations of trade."

The growing commerce of England in other directions influenced her relations to the East. Capital became more plentiful in England, and the company found it easier to raise funds. In 1667-68 Bruce informs us that the first order of the company was issued to their agents to open a trade in tea; he quotes the words of this order as follows:—"To send home by these ships 100lb. waight of the best tey that you can gett."

In 1668 Charles signed another charter. Two months after that event he married the Infanta Catherine of Portugal, and received as part of the dowry given her by the crown the Island of Bombay. The king, finding it more trouble and expense than advantage, made a virtue of necessity, and bestowed it upon the company, to whom it proved a valuable acquisition ever after. According to Bruce\* the investments of the company greatly increased in 1668, and continued to do so for a number of years in an unprecedented degree. In the course of the years 1667-68 six ships sailed to Surat, with goods and bullion to the value of £130,000; five ships to Fort St. George, with a value of £75,000; and five to Bantam, with a stock of £40,000. In the next season we are informed that the consignments to Surat consisted of 1200 tons of shipping, with a stock of the value of £75,000; to Fort St. George, of five ships and a stock of £103,000; and to Bantam, of three ships and £35,000. In the year 1669-70, 1500 tons of shipping were sent to Surat, six ships to Fort St. George, and four to Bantam, and the whole amount of the stock was £281,000. The vessels sent out in 1670-71 amounted to sixteen, and their cargoes and bullion to £303,500. In the following year four ships were sent to Surat, and nearly 2000 tons of shipping to Fort St. George; the cargo and bullion to the former being £85,000, to the latter £160,000: shipping to the amount of 2800 tons was consigned to Bantam, but of the value of the bullion and goods no account seems to be preserved. In 1672-73, stock and bullion, to the amount of £157,700 were sent to Surat and Fort St. George. On account of the war, and the more exposed situation of Bantam, the consignment to that settlement was postponed. In the following year it appears that cargoes and bullion were consigned, of the value of £100,000, to Surat;

\* Vol. ii. pp. 200, 469.

£87,000 to Fort St. George; and £41,000 to Bantam. The equipments, in 1674-75, were, five ships to Surat with £189,000 in goods and bullion; five to Fort St. George, with £202,000; and 2500 tons of shipping to Bantam, with £65,000. In 1675-76, to Surat, five ships and £96,500; to Fort St. George, five ships and £235,000; to Bantam, 2450 tons of shipping and £58,000. In 1676-77, three ships to Surat, and three to Fort St. George, with £97,000 to the one, and £176,600 to the other; and eight ships to Bantam with no account of the stock. The whole adventure to India in 1677-78 seems to have been seven ships and £352,000; of which a part, to the value of £10,000 or £12,000 was to be forwarded from Fort St. George to Bantam. In 1678-79, eight ships and £393,950. In 1679-80, ten ships and £461,700. In 1680-81, eleven ships and £596,000; and, in 1681-82, seventeen ships and £740,000.

Amidst these vast undertakings, for that age, the company was embarrassed by political events at home and abroad. At many of their stations trade could not have been conducted but by force of arms; violence, by European and native, endangered the factories and forts, as well as ships and cargoes, and the lives of the agents and mariners who served the company. The acquisition of Bombay by grant of Charles brought dangers and difficulties as well as advantages; and the company, in the midst of its increasing influence and power, must have sunk, had not an all-superintending Providence reserved it for the great events of which it was destined to be the author.

Among its difficulties the contentions of its agents abroad with one another were the most troublesome and dangerous. Nearly all appeared to be implicated in transactions as much at variance with the will of the company as with its interests, where its desires could not have been certainly known. Contentions for pre-eminence and authority ripened into a sort of civil war at the factories, and the company was compelled at last to seek some solution of this difficulty. It was resolved that authority should exist among its factors according to seniority, except where specific appointments were made from home, where the office of president was held, or where any special mission designated an agent to an especial and temporary service.

The interlopers increased rapidly in proportion as the ventures of the company became larger, and the profits of their returns were reputed to be of higher rate. The attempts of individuals, and of small parties or associations combined for the purpose, to force



the trade of the East, were as alarming to the company as war with Holland, or the enterprises of Danes and French. The company, however, obtained more and more authority from the crown, and dealt summary punishment upon all Englishmen who presumed, without their permission, to trade with the East. There existed an unrelenting antipathy to the settlement in India of any British subject whatever, other than the company's servants; and unless they found protection from some powerful native prince, they were seized by the company's officers and deported. The powers of the Admiralty jurisdiction were conceded by the king, so that interloping ships were seized and condemned. The powers of the company, by the year 1685, had assumed a magnitude which roused political jealousies at home. The authority which it swayed over the persons and property of British citizens in India, and in the ports where it traded, was unlimited. Against this the spirit of English liberty revolted; and many private adventurers who violated the company's charter, and made infamously false representations to native princes, of having authority from the King of England, were, when punished by the company, made objects of sympathy in England. From the year 1682 the company became more circumspect in the publication of its affairs, whether financial or commercial. This arose from the general desire which prevailed to deprive the company of its exclusive privileges—a desire which found vent in an openly-expressed purpose of forming a new East India Company. This project was urged upon the court and the country in 1682-83, and the king and council took it into consideration, but withheld their sanction; at the same time expressing themselves in a manner which kept up the hope of the promoters of the scheme, and subscriptions were actually entered into for a joint-stock.

A relation of the naval undertakings of the company throughout this period will find a more appropriate place in the pages set apart for a review of its foreign transactions. The revolution of 1688 necessarily interrupted the proceedings of the company and of its competitors, home and foreign. The war which raged in Ireland during that period, as in 1641, embarrassed the finances of the country, and drew off its resources in men and material. The Irish Roman Catholics having espoused the cause of James II., while the Protestants embraced that of William and Mary, the revolution led to a protracted civil war in that country, which was only terminated after a series of bloody battles and sieges for ever memorable to the

Protestants of that country for the heroism which their ancestors displayed. Although the proceedings of the company went on through all these troubles, it was a considerable time before the pacification of Ireland was ensured, and the care and anxiety of government ceased to be turned chiefly in that direction.

The alliance with the Dutch at the period of the Revolution was expected to check their aggressions upon English trade in the East; but the Dutch East India Company had its own peculiar interests to consult irrespective of the states-general, and therefore the alliance of the two nations did not heal the differences or stop the envenomed rivalry of the two companies.

It is remarkable that during the time which elapsed from the beginning of the civil war to the accession of William and Mary, the company experienced more favourable treatment, on the whole, from the imbecile and unpatriotic Stuarts than from the triumphant parliament or the Lord Protector. The Stuarts were as ready to rob the company as they were to plunder any other portion of their subjects, but they were not unwilling to afford it any advantages of monopoly, if paid for by money or political service; nor reluctant to endow it with arbitrary power within the limits of its jurisdiction. The favours granted by the Stuarts were noticed on a former page,\* but may here more generally be named. The Island of Bombay, given by Charles II. in 1668, was formally made over "to the governor and company" on the 27th of March, 1669. In 1674 he made a grant of the Island of St. Helena, which had previously been the property of the company, Captain Lancaster having taken possession of it on his return from his memorable voyage; but the Dutch wrested it from the company, and it was afterwards retaken, in the name of the British crown, by a naval force under Captain Mundane. The same sovereign, October 5, 1677, confirmed to the company the powers before granted in every case. On the 9th of August, 1683, Charles conferred the power of establishing courts of judicature for the repression of offences. James II., April 12th, 1688, confirmed all that his royal predecessors had conferred.

Among the various privileges imparted by the Stuarts, one has been strangely overlooked by historians, which, nevertheless, had an important bearing upon the authority and influence of the company. In 1676 Charles II. granted letters patent for the coinage of rupees and pice (a small copper coin) at Bombay. This invested the company with

\* Vol. i. p. 286.



sovereign privilege, and laid a new foundation of their power.

During the Commonwealth, however, an event occurred which probably had as much influence as all the favour of the Stuarts upon the commerce of the country. In order to thwart the power of the Dutch, then in possession of the carrying trade of Europe, the act known as the "Navigation Act" was passed, which forbid the importation of foreign commodities, except in English ships, or those of the countries in which such commodities were produced. Ambassadors were sent by the Dutch to Cromwell, demanding the repeal of this act. His refusal was the chief cause of the national sentiment in Holland, which produced the war so signally humiliating to the Dutch and glorious to the Protector. As the commercial wealth and enterprise of England were at that period fast rising, and an extraordinary desire for foreign commodities sprang forth in the general taste, the Dutch were much injured as carriers; and the English merchant, although at the cost of the English consumer, was relieved from the only competition which he really feared. It was not, however, to favour any class or interest, much less the East India Company, that Cromwell favoured the Navigation Laws; but to form and consolidate an English navy, by fostering and nursing up, as it were, an English commercial marine. While this policy answered the end which the autocrat contemplated, it also removed from the British ports the trade carried on in Dutch bottoms, or transferred it to English ships, and in this way the Dutch could find no market for their spices in England; force on their part was met by force, indirectly but effectually. The Dutch ships might still plunder the English vessels or factories in the Archipelago, but they were themselves debarred from carrying their spices to a market already more valued for such articles than any other. Thus, however the Commonwealth may be considered as unfavourable to the genius of monopoly, and to that of the company in particular, and however truly the reigns of the Stuarts may be regarded as partial to it,—although that partiality was capricious and dishonest,—still, political events, over which Oliver Cromwell had no control, forced him also into paths which made him unintentionally, perhaps reluctantly, an abettor of the company's progress to greatness and power. A writer, possessing peculiar facilities for comprehending this subject in all its bearings, has thus reviewed the company's history during the periods thus compared. After giving an opinion in reference to the successes of Cromwell against Holland, similar to that expressed

above, he observes:—"The spirit of the Navigation Laws was further extended by Charles II., and their operation produced so great a change in the state of the shipping and commerce of the country, that in a few years a large portion of the Dutch trade was drawn from them, and we became in a great measure the carriers of Europe. Amidst the events, comprising the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration, and the Revolution, the East India Company surmounted the powerful efforts made by their opponents, both abroad and at home, to annihilate their establishment and subvert their influence, and successfully attained the objects for which they had been incorporated. In the progress of the trade, the foundation was laid of our present empire in India: in its extension and consolidation, the genius and talents of some of our most illustrious statesmen and warriors were first developed."\*

The reign of James II. was, in many respects, favourable to the company, had they taken advantage of it. Some well-devised measures to induce that monarch to bestow better naval protection upon British Eastern commerce were proposed towards the end of that monarch's power; but the Revolution put an end to these, and introduced a new era in the domestic and foreign affairs of England. Mr. Capper has correctly referred to the company's disappointment in this respect when he observes—"During the reign of James II. the company might have strengthened their position with the utmost ease; for that prince, whatever were his other faults, did not possess that of inattention to the commercial interests of his subjects. He readily conceded them all the privileges they sought, and was prepared to forward their views in any manner that might have been desirable; but with all these advantages, the company suffered much from the incapacity or dishonesty of their own servants."

The establishment of the Revolution enabled the company to give more attention to their affairs, which were at that juncture in a disastrous condition in a pecuniary point of view. The want of economical management and of sound commercial principles created this state. The affairs of the company at home were also acted upon injuriously by the tyrannical conduct of their superior officers, who proved themselves in several instances unfit persons to be entrusted with such great power as the various charters of the company allowed. The languishing state of trade would probably have sunk the company at this juncture, had it not been for the aid received from the revenues of their foreign possessions. In a future chapter an account

\* Peter Auber.



will be given of the progress of their affairs abroad during this period, when it will be seen that events over which the company had little control put them in possession of a revenue-yielding territory. It would seem that at this time the company began to despair of their trade, and to contemplate the settlement of various places as valuable chiefly or only for the tribute they rendered. In fact, the idea of conquest, afterwards repudiated and indeed revoked, occurred to the company and was admitted in their policy. The instructions given to their agents in 1689 were in these terms:—  
 “The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care as much as our trade: ’tis that must maintain our force, when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; ’tis that must make us a nation in India; without that we are but as a great number of interlopers, united by his majesty’s royal charter, fit only to trade where nobody of power thinks it their interest to prevent us; and upon this account it is that the wise Dutch, in all their general advices which we have seen, write ten paragraphs concerning their government, their civil and military policy, warfare, and the increase of their revenue, for one paragraph they write concerning trade.”

The Dutch are hardly correctly represented in this circular. It is true that the general advices of the Dutch company referred more frequently to civil and military government than to trade, but it was for sake of trade. Neither the East India Company nor the people of Holland contemplated an Indian empire, but they regarded naval and military forces as elements of trade, upon the principles in which in those days it was supposed an Eastern trade ought to be maintained which involved monopoly, and armed competition to sustain that monopoly. The Hollanders were willing enough to make war upon natives or Europeans, if the free course of their trade were interfered with, and their exclusive hold of such commerce as they could open up endangered; but it was by trade, not by revenue extorted from oriental princes or peoples, that the company, fostered by the states-general, hoped to grow rich.

Mr. Mill, commenting upon the new principle avowed by the British East India Company to its own agents, observes:—“It thus appears at how early a period, when trade and sovereignty were blended, the trade, as was abundantly natural, became an object of contempt, and by necessary consequence, a subject of neglect. A trade, the subject of neglect, is of course a trade without profit.”

Upon this stricture of Mr. Mill, Professor Wilson thus animadvert:—“The anxiety of the directors to maintain a trade ‘without

profit’ would be somewhat inexplicable, if it was true, but the injuries to which that trade had been exposed from European competition and native exactions had sufficiently proved that it could not be carried on without the means of maintaining an independent position in India.”

The tone and substance of this critique are as unfair to Mr. Mill as the animadversions of Dr. Wilson too often are, especially when he charges the historian with partiality and injustice. The object of the company, at that period, was not simply to fix independent positions upon the spots where their commerce lay, so that the native rajahs could not exact from them, drive them out, or interfere with the ordinary current of their trade. The aim of the directors in sending out the “advices” that incited the severe remarks which Mr. Mill, as a political economist, made in the above passage, was to obtain revenue from the soil of India: territory taken from its occupants by military force, if not quietly surrendered, and to which the directors were disposed, at that time, to trust as the support of a failing trade. This is the view which is taken by most writers who have paid adequate attention to the subject. Mr. Murray says:—  
 “The voyages of the English (at first) were personal adventures, undertaken with a mingled view to discovery, commerce, and piracy, rather than to any fixed scheme of conquest or dominion. Their forts accordingly were erected as depositories for goods, or to supply commercial facilities, but not with any aim at territorial possession. It was not till 1689 that their views seem to have extended to the latter object. In the instructions issued to their agents during that year, they intimate that the increase of their revenue was henceforth to occupy as much attention as their merchandise; that they wished to be ‘a nation in India;’ and they quote with unmerited applause the conduct of the Dutch, who, they assert, in the advice sent to their governors, wrote ten paragraphs concerning tribute for one relative to trade. The means of gratifying this disposition were as yet very limited, as certain small portions of territory around Bombay and Madras comprised the whole extent of their Indian sovereignty. They held themselves ready, however, to purchase every city or district which the native princes could, by any motive, be prevailed upon to alienate.”

Mr. Murray has very properly added the words, “which the native princes could by any motive be induced to alienate,” for the negotiations carried on were not strictly commercial bargains; and previous to 1689, the feeling then avowed to their agents by the



directors was predominant, as the conduct of the Brothers Child, elsewhere to be noticed, evinced.

While the company thus resolved upon the acquisition of territory by force or purchase, or *quasi* purchase, as might be, all its great powers were put in force against interlopers with inexorable severity, leading to such indignation in England as compelled the attention of William III. and his parliament. Mr. Mill presents the aspect of affairs very briefly and completely in the following passage:—"The prosperity which the nation had enjoyed, since the death of Charles I., having rendered capital more abundant, the eagerness of the mercantile population to enter into the channel of Indian enterprise and gain had proportionably increased; and the principles of liberty being now better understood, and actuating more strongly the breasts of Englishmen, not only had private adventure, in more numerous instances, surmounted the barriers of the company's monopoly, but the public in general at last disputed the power of a royal charter, unsupported by parliamentary sanction, to limit the rights of one part of the people in favour of another, and to debar all but the East India Company from the commerce of India. Applications were made to parliament for a new system of management in this branch of national affairs; and certain instances of severity, which were made to carry the appearance of atrocity, in the exercise of the powers of martial law assumed by the company, in St. Helena and other places, served to augment the unfavourable opinion which was now rising against them."

The House of Commons was undoubtedly hostile to the company. They appointed a committee in 1689 to consider the best mode of procedure in legislating for the trade with India, and the relation of the company to it. On the 16th of January, 1690, this committee made its report, which was to the effect that a new company should be established by act of parliament, but that the existing company should hold the monopoly until such act was passed.

The company, instead of taking warning from the report of this committee and discerning the temper of the nation, proceeded to extremity against all independent merchants who sought, in contravention of their charter, to open any trade with the East. Mr. Bruce gives an extraordinary proof of this in certain instructions of the directors in 1691, given to their agents and captains:—"The court continued to act towards their opponents (the interlopers) in the same manner as they had done in the latter years of the two preceding reigns, and granted

commissions to all their captains, proceeding this season to India, to seize the interlopers of every description, and bring them to trial before the admiralty court of Bombay, explaining that as they attributed all the differences between the company and the Indian powers to the interlopers, if they continued their depredations on the subjects of the Mogul or King of Persia, they were to be tried for their lives as pirates, and sentence of death passed, but execution stayed till the king's pleasure should be known." \*

The result of these proceedings was that a spirit of hostility, which amounted to resentment, rapidly spread through parliament and the public, and addresses from both were presented to the king, praying him to dissolve the company; the parliament, however, added to the prayer, that a new one should be incorporated. The king made answer that he had referred the matter to a committee of his privy council. The pertinacity of the company, however, in persecuting the interlopers, compelled King William to take some decided step, although his own policy was to temporize. The assumptions of the company became unbounded, and the discontent of the people kept pace with these pretensions. Captain Hamilton thus relates the company's proceedings at this juncture:—"Sir Josiah Child, as chairman of the court of directors, wrote to the governor of Bombay, to spare no severity to crush their countrymen who invaded the ground of the company's pretensions in India. The governor replied by professing his readiness to omit nothing which lay within the sphere of his power to satisfy the wishes of the company; but the laws of England, unhappily, would not let him proceed so far as might otherwise be desirable. Sir Josiah wrote back with anger, 'that he expected his orders were to be his rules, and not the laws of England, which were a heap of nonsense, compiled by a few ignorant country gentlemen, who hardly knew how to make laws for the good of their own private families, much less for the regulating of companies and foreign commerce.' †

The king and parliament were at issue as to what was best to be done. His majesty was for granting a charter in his own royal right; the parliament and committee had resolved that parliament was the proper court to determine what new regulations should be made for the trade of India. The latter, however, gave way, just as in modern times the house has often shown itself indisposed to support recommendations of its committees, of which it nevertheless approved; so it was in the

\* *Annals of the East India Company*, vol. iii. p. 103.

† Hamilton's *New Account of India*, i. 232.



reign of William III. The crown found means of appeasing the house, and issued a charter by letters patent. The commons, however, acted upon by the exasperation which now pervaded the public mind, broke forth again into resolutions and protests, to which many assented, and loudly advocated—because they believed the matter was already settled by the charter, and they might in this manner cheaply purchase popularity by a display of patriotism, independence, and regard for justice. Towards the close of the session, the house accordingly resolved—"That it is the right of all Englishmen to trade to the East Indies, or any part of the world, unless prohibited by act of parliament."\*

The public ferment now rose high; it was discovered that the ministers of William had been bribed before the issue of the charter; and the democratic party did not hesitate to say that £10,000 of the bribery money found its way into the king's own hands. In 1695 the excitement was at its highest. The commons ordered the books of the company to be delivered up for the inspection of their honourable house. It was by that means clearly proved that the company had been enabled to obtain so many favours during past reigns by systematic bribery, both of the sovereigns and their ministers. The evidence against the Stuarts was damning; and the suspicions against William, although not confirmed, increased: several of the great men about his court were convicted of having advocated and advised the new charter from corrupt motives. No less than £90,000 had been in the course of the year expended to obtain a renewal of the charter. Amongst the criminals, the commons selected the Duke of Leeds for impeachment, there being clear proof of his having received £5000. The House of Lords took the matter up, some of its members having heard that the principal witness had been sent out of the way, and the house demanded that the government should take measures to arrest his flight; nothing, however, was done for that object during nine days, until it was believed that the witness was beyond arrest. The king and his government acted alike scandalously. He and his ministers did their utmost to quash all inquiry; and the people and their representatives becoming, as usual, tired of agitation and discordant among themselves, the court succeeded in covering the delinquents. Whatever services William of Orange rendered to the English nation, and whatever claims his memory may have to be toasted as "glorious, pious, and immortal," he neither acted justly, wisely, nor gratefully to the British public,

\* M'Pherson's *Annals*, ii. 142.

which bestowed upon him a throne, in these transactions. It was generally believed that he favoured the company, chiefly to prevent the expansion of a national trade with the East, which he knew would soon bear down all the opposition of the Dutch, of whose interests it was suspected he was more careful than of those of his adopted country. The only act of authority the commons seems to have exercised in opposition to the king, was to consign Sir Thomas Cook to the Tower, for refusing to disclose the names of the corrupt ministers who had trafficked in the liberties of the people. He was eventually released, and when the agitation subsided, "the court of committees" bestowed upon him £12,000, as compensation for his incarceration and any losses attending upon it.

In spite of every obstacle which was presented then or in the following years, a new charter came into force, granted by William and Mary, 7th October, 1693, confirming the rights and privileges of the company, subject to its acceptance of such orders, directions, additions, alterations, restrictions, qualifications, as the king in council should think fit to make or appoint at any time before the 29th September, 1694; under which proviso supplementary charters or letters patent were issued at two different dates, viz., the 11th November, 1693, and the 28th September, 1694. By a like instrument from William III., dated the 13th April, 1698, regulations for the distribution of votes and for other purposes were made.\* This "instrument" must not be confounded with the charter granted that year, it being a "charter supplementary," or "letter patent," dependent upon that of October, 1693.

The losses of the company by interlopers and pirates between 1693 and 1698 were very heavy, but have been too variously stated to enable any careful historian to approach an accurate estimate. For several years the company paid no dividend, and was bound down by debt from enterprises which held out reasonable prospects of success.

At this juncture a proposition for a new Scottish company was brought forward, and a charter was granted to it to trade to the East and West Indies, Africa, and America. This undertaking was brought to an end by the misfortunes of the Darien settlement. Another society, however, was more fortunate. At the termination of the French war the country was placed in great difficulties for money to pay the heavy expenses then incurred. The East India Company offered a loan of £700,000 at four per cent. interest if their charter should be confirmed, and by an

\* *The Laws relating to India and the East India Company.*



act of parliament, the exclusive right to trade to the East Indies should be secured. The rival association determined to outbid them, by offering a loan of two millions on similar conditions. To this stock foreigners as well as Englishmen, bodies corporate as well as individuals, were invited to contribute. The contributions were to bear an interest of eight per cent. per annum, and the company was to be allowed liberty to trade on the principle of joint-stock, or separate ventures, as the company itself might determine. A bill was introduced to parliament, and an act passed in the interest of the new association, and a charter granted after tedious yet acrimonious discussions.\*

On the 5th September, 1698, William III. incorporated a second East India Company, under the name of the "English Company trading to the East Indies." To this company the commerce with India was exclusively committed, with the exception "that the Governor and the Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies" (the old company) were to be permitted to carry on their trade until the 29th September, 1701.† Mill gives the following account of the issuing of this charter:—"In conformity with this act a charter passed the great seal, bearing date the 3rd of September, constituting the subscribers to the stock of £2,000,000 a body corporate, under the name of the 'General Society.' This charter empowered the subscribers to trade, on the terms of a regulated company, each subscriber for his own account. The greater part, however, of the subscribers desired to trade upon a joint-stock: and another charter, dated the 5th of the same month, formed this portion of the subscribers, exclusive of the small remainder, into a joint-stock company, by 'the name of the English Company trading to the East Indies.'"‡

Bruce, Anderson, and M'Pherson all represent the two companies as fettered by certain regulations as to dividends, which the first of these writers sums up in the following terms:—"It was provided in reference to the old company that their estates should be chargeable with their debts; and that if any further dividends were made before the payments of their debts, the members who received them should be responsible for the debts with their private estates to the amount of the sums thus unduly received. This measure, of prohibiting dividends while debt is unpaid, or of rendering the proprietors responsible with their fortunes to the amount of

the dividends received, befitted the legislative justice of the nation. A clause, on the same principle, was enacted with regard to the new company, that they should not allow their debts at any time to exceed the amount of their capital stock; or, if they did, that every proprietor should be responsible for the debts with his private fortune, to the whole amount of whatever he should have received in any way of dividend or share after the debts exceeded the capital."

The formation of this new company reveals much folly and equal corruption as prevailing in parliament and among the public. Under the pretence of zeal for national interest, the projectors of the new company succeeded in obtaining another monopoly, instead of the old one; simply transferring the real or supposed advantages of a protected and exclusive trade from the hands of one set of men to another. This must have been as obvious to the parliament which passed the act, and the king who granted the charter, and his cabinet by whose advice he acted, as it was to the merchants whose rival monopolies bid for their favour; but king, cabinet, and parliament, in the face of all this, and pretending to do as they did for the welfare of the nation, transferred the monopoly from one set of men to another, because the favoured party were willing to advance the larger loan. The only party honest in the midst of so much corruption was the old company, which had the plea of having rendered great services, acquired property under charters, and become possessed of territories yielding revenue.

The old company showed itself equal to the emergency; then, as in all future periods of its history, a critical conjuncture served to bring out its energies, and disclose talents which were often but poorly employed, until the occurrence of danger quickened them. For a number of years previously the amount of its trade was very small, and far from profitable:—"The equipments for 1689-90 were on a reduced scale; consisting of three ships only, two for Bombay, and one for Fort St. George. They were equally small the succeeding year. We are not informed to what the number of ships or value of cargo amounted in 1691-92. In the following year, however, the number of ships was eleven; and was increased in 1693-94 to thirteen. In the following year there was a diminution, but to what extent does not appear. In each of the years 1695-96 and 1696-67 the number of ships was eight. And in 1697-98 it was only four."

The spirit evinced and the measures taken to meet the emergency of 1698, the writer above quoted thus states upon the authority of Adam Smith:—"The old, or London com-

\* See chap. xiii. p. 286.

† *Charters from the Crown, and Laws relating to the East India Company.*

‡ *Wilson's continuation of Mill*, lib. i. cap. v.



pany, lost not their hopes. They were allowed to trade for three years on their own charter; and availing themselves of the clause in the act which permitted corporations to hold stock of the new company, they resolved to subscribe into this fund as largely as possible; and under the privilege of private adventure, allowed by the charter of the English company, to trade separately, and in their own name, after the three years of their charter should have expired. The sum which they were enabled to appropriate to this purpose was £315,000." That the company "lost not their hopes," as the writer just quoted expresses it, is very obvious from the terms in which the directors wrote to their agents at the presidencies and factories. They urged those agents to second their exertions, and they would send out increasingly large equipments, with which the new company could not compete. They represented the parliamentary triumph of "the English Company"—as the new one was styled—as temporary, arising from a party move, which time, wisdom, and management would enable the directors to defeat. They assured their agents that no ground for alarm existed, either at home or at the settlements; that "two East India Companies in England could no more subsist without destroying one the other, than two kings at the same time regnant in the same kingdom; that now a civil battle was to be fought between the old company and the new company; and that two or three years must end this war, as the old or the new must give way; that, being veterans, if their servants abroad would do their duty, they did not doubt of the victory; that if the world laughed at the pains the two companies took to ruin each other, they could not help it, as they were on good ground and had 'a charter.'"\* Orders were also given to the agents to behave themselves circumspectly to native princes, and more especially to the Great Mogul, whom they were to take every means to conciliate. It appears as if the directors relied much upon a "voluntary humility" to the Great Mogul, as a means of ingratiating themselves, to the disparagement of their rivals. In this alone they failed, happily so for their future fortunes.

The new company proved itself no match for the old one. The loan of two millions to government was an undertaking beyond the resources and influence of the men who composed it. It was obliged to borrow money at a disadvantage, to replace that given to the government, and thus became embarrassed from the beginning. When the period came for taking up the stock of the new company,

\* Documents of the company, collected by Bruce.

many of the subscribers were unable to fulfil what they had undertaken, and others who calculated upon the speedy destruction of the old company were appalled by its bold front and resolute prosecution of its plans, with a capital superior to the new company, having made no loan to government. Bruce declares that a panic ensued among the shareholders, who sold out their stock at great loss, and brought down the price in the market to a ruinous discount.

The first expedition which the new company fitted out—after having been anticipated by the old company on a much larger scale, as already quoted—consisted of three ships, with a stock of £178,000. The old company immediately followed that minor effort by one of great efficiency and vigour, amounting to thirteen sail of five hundred tons burden each, and goods considerably exceeding half a million sterling in value. At this juncture, too, they obtained various grants of territory in India, the town of Calcutta, afterwards the very seat of their glory, being among them.

While the new company was in trepidation, without capital to trade with, and its stock at a discount in the market, the old company was silently and quietly laying the foundations of Fort William at Calcutta, and making arrangements not only to possess there a fortification which they hoped to be impregnable, but also for erecting a station into a presidency. Bruce states that besides the general moral effort of these spirited proceedings, parliament became sensible of their energy, and passed an act entitling "the London Company"—as the old association was called—to trade, after their own charter should expire, under the charter of "the English Company," to the amount of the stock they had subscribed to its funds. This was a legal right which the London Company possessed in common with all other persons who subscribed to the stock of the new company, but to avert any injustice on the part of either that body or the government, an act especially empowering them to do so was sought and obtained. It is not improbable that "the English Company's stock" would have become utterly unsaleable in the market, had it not been for the large amount held by the London Company.

The new company availed itself of the discarded agents and officers of the old, which proved injurious in the long run of events, for these men were dismissed either for bad conduct, or, having too strong a will, for resisting the authorities above them. These persons committed their new employers to measures so imprudent and violent as to defeat their intentions, and impair their interests. Several



of these persons were sent out to India, whither they went in the character of royal ambassadors, injuring both companies by the representations which they made to the native princes, and assailing the old company in the very manner which it had been brought as a complaint against it so often that it had treated interlopers. Whatever had been the sins of the old company, those of the new surpassed them; so that before the short term allowed to the former had run out, men grew weary of hearing of the violence, arrogance, false accusations, piracies, and villanies which the agents of the new, and ostensibly reformed, company perpetrated. The English name was lowered and disgraced, not only in the opinion of other European nations trading to India, but in that of native princes, and more especially of the Mogul himself.

At home there was a strong disposition among politicians to keep up this bitterness. "The whole of this contest," says Grant,\* "was only one division of the great battle that agitated the state between the Tories and the Whigs, of whom the former favoured the old company, and the latter the new." Both parties suffered intensely; the market was inundated with oriental wares. The new company made overtures for a junction with the old, but the latter held sternly off. The silk weavers of Spitalfields, Norwich, Canterbury, and Coventry petitioned against the admission of Indian silks, which the rival importers were selling at a loss, and so underselling the home production, that the English manufacturers, employers and operatives were in ruined circumstances. The result of this agitation was one of those acts for the protection of the silk trade which fetter commerce and repress enterprise and industry. For this act William was more desirous than his parliament, or any portion of his people, except the manufacturers of silk. The printers of muslin and calico were, however, participators in the protection.

When the king received the directors of the old company on the subject of permitting them to continue a body corporate, he strongly recommended them to coalesce with the new company. This occurred in March, 1700. The proprietors called a general court of the proprietary together, to make known the king's recommendation; but they delayed to do so for some time, and then were actuated by policy to keep up an appearance of respect to the king's counsel, with which at the time they intended no compliance.

Some months later the king sent a message to know what proceedings they had taken in virtue of his advice to them. The directors

again summoned a general court. The proprietors passed the following resolution:—"That their company as they have always been, so they are still, ready to embrace every opportunity by which they may manifest their duty to his majesty, and zeal for the public good; and that they are desirous to contribute their utmost endeavours for the preservation of the Indian trade to this kingdom, and are willing to agree with the new company upon reasonable terms." Mr. Mill calls this resolution evasive. He is sometimes, perhaps frequently, too eager to fix censure upon the old company, arising from the adverse politico-economical views entertained by him, which prevent him from making due allowance for the spirit of the age, the degree of civilization then prevalent, and the little influence it had upon seafaring matters and commercial pursuits in general. The resolution of the court of proprietors was not a hearty acquiescence with the will of his majesty, but they considered that it was not for them to take any initiatory step towards a coalition. As the stronger party, they only required time to bear down the competition of the other; they believed that they had little to fear for themselves. It was for the weaker party to offer terms, and so to press them as to make it the interest of their opponents to accept those terms. The king and his ministers did not take this into sufficient account, and they were chiefly anxious that the two companies should coalesce, because a better prospect might be thus held out to borrow more money, or obtain the retention of what had been borrowed on easier terms. All the parties made much pretension of having the welfare of their country chiefly at heart, but none of them gave any practical proofs of being actuated by a sentiment so exalted. That "the London Company" were not evasive in the resolution condemned by Mr. Mill was soon proved, for when "the English Company" proposed formal terms, the former at once offered to have them submitted to discussion by seven delegates from each body.

As the year and the century were nearly at the close, the old company entered earnestly into negotiations with the legislature for a permanent adjustment of the questions then open. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed "to receive proposals for paying off the national debts, and advancing the credit of the nation." "The London Company" took advantage of this circumstance, and offered to pay off a million sterling which the government owed the English Company, and for which eight per cent. was paid; the London Company offering to hold it at five per cent. It was the old expedient of outbidding

\* *Sketch of the History of the East India Company.*



their rivals by pecuniary favours to the government. It was partly met in the old way. The commons' committee fell in with the proposal, and every thing appeared to be on the point of adjustment, once more giving the old company the victory over all enemies, when the house ignored the proceedings of their committee, and the difficulties remained still obstructing commerce, and the enigma of the

future continued still without solution, when the seventeenth century closed upon the struggles of the old East India Company. Those struggles were intense, abroad as well as at home; and were alike successful, although often repressed by opposition and defeat. To the trials and triumphs of the company abroad the reader's attention will be directed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER LII.

### THE ENGLISH IN INDIA AND THE EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO, FROM THE SETTLEMENT AT HOOGLY TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

DIRECTING attention to that quarter in which the British, when simply in pursuit of spice, opened up their first trading operations—the Archipelago, the Islands of Java and Japan, and the Moluccas—the state of things will appear as unfavourable as could be well conceived, when, just at the time, upon the Indian continent, the English settled down at Hoogly, and were looking forward with excited prospect to a flourishing trade with the rich province of Bengal. The business of that coast, from the city of Madras to Hoogly, was superintended from the distant settlement of Bantam, in the far east. The elevation of Fort St. George into a presidency relieved the chief of the presidency of Bantam of much care, but at the same time diminished the importance of his post, which seems to have declined in relative influence from that time. It was at this place that the power of the Dutch was most severely felt, as they roamed the Eastern Sea with triumphant insolence and unchecked aggression. The company was at this time most anxious to pursue a trade with the Chinese, and notwithstanding previous failures to accomplish the like in that way, hoped still to accomplish it from Macao, through the aid of the Portuguese, upon principles that might strengthen both against the overwhelming power of the Dutch. The delicate task of achieving this much desired object was committed to the agency at Bantam. Full power was given to them, but unfortunately they received nothing else. The following communication from them to the directors in 1648 discloses a state of things extremely humiliating to the company, and makes one wonder at, as well as admire, the courage and pertinacity with which the English held on against all odds, and conquered all at last:—

“The experiment which you desire we should make with one of our small vessels

for trade into China, we are certainly informed, by those that know the present state and condition of that country very well, cannot be undertaken without the inevitable loss both of ship, men, and goods; for as the Tartars overrun and waste all the inland country, without settling any government in the places which they overcome, so some of their great men in China, with a mighty fleet at sea of upwards of a thousand sail of great ships (as is confidently reported), rob and spoil all the sea-coasts, and whatsoever vessels they can meet with; and how one of our feeble vessels would be able to defend themselves against such forces is easy to be supposed. As for the Portugals in Macao, they are little better than mere rebels against their viceroy in Goa, having lately murdered their captain-general, sent thither to them, and Macao itself so distracted amongst themselves, that they are daily spilling one another's blood. But put the case, all these things were otherwise, we must need say, we are in a very poor condition to seek out new discoveries, while you will not allow us either factors, shipping, or sailors, scarce half sufficient to maintain the trade already you have on foot; and therefore the Dutch but laugh at us, to see us meddle with new undertakings, being hardly able to support the old.”

The Dutch at this time rendered any trade with China by any other European nation difficult, as well as by themselves; they penetrated to Canton, and were expelled, but not only continued to infest the Canton River and the coasts as pirates, they assisted the Tartars against the Chinese all along the eastern shores of the empire.

Until 1664 no further efforts were made, either directly from home, or through the agency at Bantam, to make a favourable impression upon the Chinese. In that year



some vessels were sent to Canton. At first the prospects seemed favourable; the supercargoes landed at Macao, and secured a house as a temporary factory. The Chinese demanded that the ships should be measured, and in the result insisted upon "two thousand tales." The supercargoes offered an amount equal to a thousand dollars, but the reply was, "we will abate nothing." At the same time eight musketeers were placed to guard the house of the supercargoes, and prevent their leaving. After much negotiation, and the most insolent and oppressive behaviour on the part of the "celestial authorities," the supercargoes were permitted to return to Bantam, having been unable to effect a single sale.

They had scarcely left Macao, when the Tartar government took measures to repress all foreign trade within the empire, nor were the Dutch exempt from the application of this prohibitory system, notwithstanding the venal assistance which they had rendered to the Tartar oppressors.

After the severe defeat of the Dutch navy in Europe, through the genius and courage of Oliver Cromwell's commanders, and the consequent treaty, by which the Dutch engaged themselves to restore such possessions in the Archipelago as had belonged to the English, negotiations were opened by the English agents at Bantam for the execution of the stipulated terms. The restoration, or, as the Dutch called it, the cession, of the Island of Polaroön, was one of the terms of stipulation. The governor of that island pretended that he could not deliver it up without orders from the governor of Banda. On application to him, he pleaded that he must have orders from his superior, the governor of Batavia; he pleaded the want of definite instructions from the directors of the Dutch company. The fear of Oliver Cromwell alone caused the Dutch to surrender anything; and they continued to defer the surrender until 1665, and then the spice-trees had been cut down, and the inhabitants banished. Hostilities having recommenced, the English were expelled both from Polaroön and Damru, and subsequently, by the treaty of Breda, they were both ceded to the Dutch.

From 1663 to 1668 the company appears, from the correspondence carried on with its factory at Bantam, to have been anxious for an active prosecution of trade in Japan. Mr. Quarles Brown, the chief agent, replied that to accomplish such a purpose, the plans and modes of the Dutch must be imitated, who sought in Siam, Cambodia, and Tonquin the foreign articles most in request in

Japan. The Dutch advanced money to native merchants, who procured the commodities in the interior, and brought them to the coasts.

In 1667-68 attempts were made to reopen the trade with Sumatra, which had been lost during the previous troubles with the Dutch.

It was in consequence of the recommendations of Mr. Brown, as to the foreign articles most used in Japan, and as to the way in which the Dutch procured such articles, that, in 1672, an attempt was made to found a factory in Tonquin. The kingdom thus designated is bounded on the north by the province of Yunnan, in China; on the east, by the province of Canton and Bay of 'Tonquin; on the south, by Cochin; and on the west, by the kingdom of Laos. It is twelve hundred miles in length, and five hundred miles in breadth. Its independence was established in 1553, but it is now subject to Cochin China. The president at Bantam was led to believe that there were many commodities which the people of Tonquin and Japan would like to interchange, and he hoped to establish a commerce between the two places, and find means to introduce British goods, and articles from continental India.

On the 25th of June a vessel from Bantam reached the river of Tonquin. After passing the bar, and ascending up the river fourteen miles, they were stopped until permission for their progress should be obtained from the mandarin. Ung-ja-Thay came on board, attended by a guard of soldiers, and gave permission for the vessel to proceed to Hein. The passage was one of curiosity to the English rather than of commerce. The supercargo having advised the agent at Bantam of the reception he met with, the communication was forwarded to the directors at home, and is still preserved as one of the most curious documents connected with the early commerce of the company.

"In sailing up the river the ship several times touched, and the mandarin, being this day aboard, pinioned the captain, and threatened to cut off the chief mate's head, because they would not tow the ship against a violent stream, which at last they were forced to try; but as soon as the anchor was up, the tide or current carried down the ship, in spite of all help, so he was something appeased. We cannot tell how this action of the mandarin's can consist with a good correspondence hereafter. Were it not that we have respect to the company's affairs, and that we would not be thought to impede their designs by any rashness of ours, we should have resisted any



such affront, though we saw but little hopes of escaping, being so far up the river, and our ship so full of soldiers. He told Mr. Gyfford that we must know we were come to a great country of great justice and government, and that if we would do all things that he would have us, it should be well for us; and these words he wrote down upon a paper in China characters, and bade him keep and remember it. Mr. Gyfford said we were very willing, being strangers, to be observant to their customs and laws, but such unreasonable impositions as these, of forcing a ship to go against wind and tide, and putting such dishonour upon us as to pinion the captain, seemed very strange to us, and therefore we desired no other favour from him than leave to go back again, for we believed our honourable employers would not trade here upon such terms. The mandarin answered, that while we were out, we might have kept out. The king was King of Tonquin before we came there, and would be after we departed, and that this country had no need of any foreign thing; but now we are within his power, we must be obedient thereto, comparing it to the condition of a married woman, who can blame no one but herself for being brought into bondage. So that we can perceive as yet but a very little affection they have for trade.

"Discoursing with Ung-ja-Thay of our intentions to settle a factory, he said little to it, only showed us the king's chop, authorising him to receive us. He says, likewise, he has power over ship and goods; so it seems he is absolute, and will, as he says, take out what he pleases: to which we must submit, for it is impossible to get a ship back over the bar, by reason of the shoalness of the water and the contrary winds; we are therefore compelled to give him his way in all things. His soldiers and secretaries, always keeping on board, are a great charge to us, for he calls for wine at his pleasure, and gives it amongst them, forcing them and our seamen to drink full cups.

"Much ado we had to put off Ung-ja-Thay from making the seamen work on the Sabbath-day, for we told him beforehand that it was not our custom to work on that day, for God commanded us to the contrary, who was greater than all the kings and princes of the earth.

"The ship ran ashore again at high water, and the captain could not bring her off, so the mandarin, thinking himself wiser than him or his mate, in this extremity made the seamen work night and day till they were nearly exhausted, and would have the ship hauled off by force, which, to please him, we

tried, but to no purpose, for she presently swayed, so we fear we must of necessity stay here this spring. We now looked very solitary one upon another, and began to think that his extraordinary earnestness to get the ship further up the river was to give him a better opportunity to ransack us, which makes us esteem our condition no better than that of a prize."

They had but a sorry prospect of commercial dealings, and as little reason to congratulate themselves on the liberality of the presents from his majesty. "About noon Ung-ja-Thay went away, and sent us word we should come up to the city, that we might know what prices the king would give us for our goods, and that we might take a starved bull of a small size, which he brought as part of the present from the king, but would not deliver it before now, nor hath not the remainder yet, which, he told us, was fifty thousand great cashies, nor the king's chop. About two o'clock we embarked on board the galley that waited to carry us up, and went on our journey to the city, with longing expectation, to know what prices he would make upon our goods, for we were not admitted to make a price ourselves; but, about two miles off, the other mandarin, who commanded the galleys, Ung-ja-Thay, that villainous fellow, stayed for us, and invited us ashore, for he had got before us to prevent our complaint to his superior, and while we were there present he colleagued with us most abominably, now he had done us the most prejudice he could, in carrying away all the goods that would have yielded us any profit, and then would have us to be cheerful, like a conqueror, who would have his prisoner to be merry when he lost all he hath."

The British witnessed many proofs of the stern and sanguinary despotism which reigned at Tonquin. Here also, as almost everywhere else, the English agents found the Dutch before them. The king dealt with them, receiving saltpetre and money for the products of the country. In spite of all difficulties, the agents at Bantam persevered in maintaining some traffic at Tonquin until 1697, when it was found necessary to abandon it.

In 1681 the court of directors at home devoted especial attention to secure a trade with Canton. They directed questions to the chief of the factory at Bantam on this subject to the following effect:—

"1. Whether there was reason to hope that the sanction of the emperor for a free access to that port could be obtained?

"2. Whether the people at Amoy, with



whom a profitable trade was transacted, but who were at war with the Tartars, would be offended, and decline further intercourse, on learning that the company had admission to Canton?"

Before the agents could answer these questions, they received a solution not contemplated: the Tartars conquered Amoy, and excluded the English, whose ships had to go to Macao instead.

At this period the directors resolved, if possible, to carry on a trade with China direct, and not through Bantam. This resolution appears to have been taken from the inconvenience experienced by the expensive and incommodious country vessels used between Bantam and China. The company at the same time adopted the view, that in all their oriental traffic indirect trade should be abandoned as fast as circumstances allowed.

In 1682 the differences between the English and Dutch threatened to deprive the former of all safe commerce with Java; the company therefore resolved to transfer the superintendence of the China ships from Bantam to the council at Surat. It is remarkable that the letter of the court expressing this determination bears date only twenty-one days after the actual capture of Bantam, which the Dutch succeeded in effecting on the 30th of August, 1682. Dutch writers deny that the expulsion of the English was by Dutch agency, and the proofs they assign are worthy of consideration. A war raged at that juncture between the King of Bantam and his son. The English, Mr. Mill alleges, took part with the son. In this allegation he follows Dutch authorities. The son triumphed, and expelled the English; but the victories of the son were obtained mainly through the instrumentality of the Dutch, who hated the king because he favoured the English. The Dutch affected to befriend the expelled English. They allowed them to take refuge at Batavia, and even offered to remove their property thither in their ships. The Dutch allege, that as the English were banished, not by them, but by the conquering native prince, and as they offered hospitality to British sufferers, they were innocent of all evil in the case. The English maintained that the revolt of the prince was instigated and made successful by the Dutch, and that he would not have expelled the English but at the instigation of their rivals, a word from whom would have prevented such an injustice. The English declined receiving the proffered assistance, and demanded reparation for the injuries inflicted. Had Cromwell lived, it is certain that all such wrongs would have been redressed, but James was imbecile; and not-

withstanding the general fairness which the English attributed to Dutch William, it was generally believed that he regarded with great leniency the misdoings of his countrymen. The company, therefore, looked for redress in Europe from both James and William in vain. Professor Wilson says that "there is no evidence the English took any part in the dispute, nor is it likely." He also says, "They were not sufficiently strong to provoke the enmity of the Dutch." This is a strange remark, coming from a source of so much intelligence and ability; for whatever the inferiority of numbers of the English at Bantam, and however depressed their affairs at that juncture, that factory was one of the earliest, was a presidency, the centre of their trade in the Archipelago, and of such commerce as they were able to open with China, and their occupation of the position had always been a source of jealousy, and even "enmity," with the Dutch.

The English made various attempts afterwards to re-establish themselves. They sent embassies and presents of gunpowder to the King of Bantam, and received from his majesty presents of tea, but the intervention of the Dutch always prevented the English again having a factory there. If they had been too weak to provoke Dutch enmity, as Dr. Wilson affirms, how is it that Dutch influence was so strenuously used to prevent their return?

Upon the loss of Bantam, the English transactions of "the eastern coast" were transferred to Fort St. George. The charge of the ships for China was, however, as already stated, given over to the council at Surat. Soon after this event the court of directors wrote to the council of Surat concerning the trade with China and the general business of the company in the following terms (the court wrote on the 2nd of April, 1683):—

"The loss of Bantam to the Dutch, and the *Johanna*, outward bound to your place, with her stock of £70,000, most bullion, but more especially an extraordinary and unparalleled failure of credit in all the public funds of this city, which hath caused the failure of divers of the goldsmiths in Lombard Street, whose names possibly you may have an account of in private letters: this unusual occurrence did so affright all people, that many demanded at once their money at interest from the company, to satisfy whom we were necessitated to publish these three following resolutions:—

"1. That all money arising from March sale should entirely be disposed of towards the satisfying of the company's debts.

"2. That no bullion should be sent out



upon our ships till all the company's debts due by or before the 31st of March were fully satisfied.

"3. That the company would make no dividend of any money on goods to the adventurers till all the debts now owing by them were fully paid."

Under these circumstances, undertakings in the Eastern seas, or even in connection with India, where the company had obtained so firm a hold, became impracticable, except such as, in the most ordinary course, were essential.

In 1686 the company interdicted their servants from dealing in any teas or spices.

In 1687 orders were given to send home teas well packed, which would turn to good account now that it was "a company's commodity, and not of private trade."

In 1689, notwithstanding the disconsolate letters which the directors had written to their agents at Surat, Bombay, and Fort St. George, concerning the trade with China and other parts of Eastern Asia, continental and insular, some vigorous efforts were made to induce the reluctant and extortionate Chinese to exchange their commodities for the goods of Europe. Captain Heath arrived in the ship *Defence* at Canton, where he experienced difficulties and obstructions the most disheartening. He continued to outwit the Chinese officials through means of their own cunning, and he sometimes succeeded in conciliating them by bribes. The captain was, however, in the end unfortunate, for several of his men and his ship's doctor were killed, and he was obliged to leave Canton; British interests, on the whole, having been impaired by his visit, after success had seemed to crown his efforts.

The heavy duty upon tea in England embarrassed the transactions of the company. The directors ordered their agents to select none but the very best quality, otherwise, in consequence of this duty, "it would not defray either freight or charges."

The exportation of silver from England to India was at this early period of the company's history, as well as in later years, a subject of uneasiness, especially to those of the directors less conversant with the laws of commerce and of political economy. In 1700, in order to lessen that exportation, the court instructed their supercargoes to forward to Madras from China £20,000 in gold.

Thus, a review of the commerce of the company with China and the Eastern Archipelago, from the commencement of the Civil War in England to the close of the seventeenth century, discloses by no means a

prosperous state of things. Chinese obstinacy, and that of various Indo-Chinese nations, Dutch wars and Dutch treachery, the listlessness, laziness, and disingenuousness of the Portuguese at Macao, the wars of Tartars and Chinese, the persistent attempts of interlopers, the turmoil and discontent at home, the loss of credit sustained by the company in London,—all these causes operated to render the trade with the islands and peninsulas of Eastern Asia, and with Canton, burdensome, difficult, and dangerous. The main obstructions were, however, the piracy, perfidy, and waging of open war by the Dutch. Notwithstanding the triumph of England over Holland in Europe, and the accession of the Prince of Orange to the English throne, the Dutch throughout Eastern Asia were never conciliatory, unless to cover a hostile purpose, and were as much enemies in peace as in war. They succeeded in depriving the English of their chief insular settlements, expelling them from Japan and the Moluccas, and in frustrating their attempts to open up trading intercourse with all the nations having a coastline east of the Malacca Straits.

Soon after the settlement at Hoogly, Madras was elevated to the dignity of a presidency, it having been found inconvenient to have the chief authority for reference in the business of the Coromandel coast so distant as Bantam. When this honour was conferred on Fort St. George, its garrison consisted of twenty-six English soldiers; in less than two years after the future metropolis of the great and extensive presidency of Madras was guarded by ten English musketeers, and the civil establishment was, for economy, reduced to two factors.

When the war with Holland was waged by Cromwell, among the many naval enterprises of the Dutch, adverse to the British, in the East, was one against the company's commerce at Surat. "A fleet of twelve Dutchmen," or, as others relate, "eight large ships," blockaded the harbour. The coasting-trade between the different English factories was suspended, in consequence of the vigilance and activity of the Batavian cruisers. The Gulf of Persia was "scoured" by the Hollanders. Three of the company's ships were captured, and one sunk. At the same time the ships of the "states-general" literally hunted down the Portuguese. They drove them entirely out of the Island of Ceylon, and held there garrisons, in dangerous proximity to the British factory of Fort St. George. A Dutch fleet blockaded Goa and the small Island of Diu. The Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf were filled with their "rovers."



The English were reduced to great distress. At Surat the "out-factories" were abolished, and the agents withdrawn. There was not a post occupied by the English on continental India that was not in peril from the superior naval power of the states-general. The English at Surat described themselves in their letters home as fallen into as much contempt "as the Portugals in India, or the Jews in Spain."

In the early part of the year 1664 Sevajee,\* the rebel chief of the Mahrattas,† already formidable to the Mogul, having captured many places, attacked the city of Surat.‡ It is probable that the main cause of Sevajee's attack upon Surat was, as stated on page 676, the conviction that the Emperor Aurungzebe had been supplied with ammunition by the Europeans settled there. This motive, attributed to him by some writers, is denied by others. There should be no doubt of the fact that the emperor had been thus enabled to make war upon the Mahratta with advantage, and that the latter must have known it, and would, if possible, avenge so great an injury, and take measures to prevent its recurrence. The following passage from Bruce§ is sufficient proof of the provocation given in this way to the Mahratta chief:—"Shortly before his death Cromwell licensed a Mr. Rolt to export three mortars and twenty thousand shells, to be disposed of to Aurungzebe, then engaged in rebellion against his father. The company directed the Surat presidency to seize on these articles as illicit; and the more effectually to frustrate the speculation, sent large quantities of ordnance, mortars, shells, &c., desiring the different presidencies to dispose of them at the best price to either of the four rival princes who should first apply for them, preserving meanwhile a strict neutrality." It is impossible that Sevajee did not hear of an event that created such a hubbub, not only at Surat, but at all the company's stations in India. It is likely, too, that no small portion of the ammunition found its way into his own hands, partly by purchase, and partly by plunder.

The defence made by the British is only glanced at in the chapter devoted to Mahratta history. Mr. Mill very briefly narrates the transaction, summing up in two sentences the facts that the English fought bravely, repelled the enemy, pleased the Mogul, and obtained in reward "new privileges of trade to the

company. Professor Wilson, as usual, at variance with Mill, complains that "scant justice is done to the company's servants in the brief notice of a conduct highly remarkable for cool and resolute courage." Mr. Mill was not concerned to notice the conduct of the English as that of "the company's servants," nor did he do scant justice to them, for he pronounces a glowing panegyric upon them. His treatment however of an incident admitted by himself to have had such important results is too brief, and justifies the learned Oxford professor's complaint on that score. The account given by the latter is very full and complete; it is as follows:—"Sevajee's approach to within fifteen miles of Surat was announced on the morning of the 5th of January, upon which the governor retired into the castle, and the inhabitants fled from every part of the city except that adjacent to the factory. In the evening the Mahrattas entered, and part blockaded the castle, whilst the rest plundered and set fire to the houses. During that night and the following day repeated demands and menaces were sent to the factory, but they were all met with terms of defiance. 'We replied to Sevajee,' says the despatch to the court, dated the 26th of January, 1664, 'we were here on purpose to maintain the house to the death of the last man, and therefore not to delay his coming upon us.' It does not appear that any organized attack was made upon the factory, but the Mahrattas assembled in considerable numbers before it, and broke into an adjoining house. To prevent their establishing themselves in a situation from which they might offer serious annoyance, a sally was made from the factory, which had the effect of dislodging the assailants, and putting them to flight, with some loss and three men wounded on the part of the English. This success was followed up with spirit: the plundered house was occupied; several sorties were made, and pushed even to the gates of the castle, and the neighbourhood for near a quarter of a mile round was cleared of the enemy. No further attempts were made to molest the factory or its vicinity during the three days that Sevajee continued in possession of the town, and the inhabitants of the quarter in which the factory was situated 'were very thankful in their acknowledgments, blessing and praising the English nation,' to whose valour they ascribed their exemption from the calamities which had desolated the rest of the city. The governor presented Sir G. Oxenden with a dress of honour, and recommended the interests of the company to Aurungzebe. The emperor in the first instance remitted the customs at Surat for one

\* For his history see p. 670, vol. i.

† For the origin of the Mahrattas see p. 669, vol. i.

‡ For an account of the sack of Surat by Sevajee see vol. i. p. 676, and the note on that page. For a description of the place at the present day, see vol. i. p. 145.

§ Bruce vol. i. p. 39.



year in favour of all merchants, and subsequently granted a perpetual remission of a portion of the duties to the English in particular. The despatch from Surat states the proportion to be one-half, but the translation of the *Husb-ul-hookum*, in the Records, says a half per cent.; and in the firman granted on the 26th of June, 1667, the amount is stated at one per cent. out of three, the ordinary impost. A more important provision of the firman is exemption from all transit charges on any pretext whatever."

The English factory at Rajahpore was at this time abandoned, the exactions of the Mahratta chief rendering it impossible for the English to trade there with profit. It was plain that Sevajee both feared and respected the English, but formed exaggerated ideas of their riches, and was therefore desirous to have them in his cities, in order that, under the pretext of dues and duties, he might extort money from them.

In 1670 he again attacked Surat. His aim this time was to take possession of it—partly because of its great wealth, thereby to diminish the resources of the Mogul, and partly to turn to his own advantage the sources of commercial riches that were there. Failing to capture it, his intention was to plunder it, or compel payment of a ransom. Mr. Mill is even more brief in his account of this second attack than of the first,\* simply stating that "the principal part of the goods was transported to Sivally,† and placed on board the ships, the English remaining in the factory, defending themselves successfully. Some lives were lost, and some property damaged."

The testimony of Orme is directly against that of Bruce, for he asserts that neither the English nor Dutch factories were attacked, nor was any demand made upon them. Mr. Hamilton and Dr. Wilson contradict Orme. The first named represents the town as partially pillaged; the doctor expresses his surprise that Orme should have studied so negligently the documents at the India House, and sums up their contents on the matter thus:—"On this occasion, as on the former, the English factory was defended with spirit, 'the enemy,' says the letter from Surat, 'found such hot service from our house, that they left us.' Subsequently a parley was held with 'the captain of the brigade,' who agreed to refrain from further molestation, and 'the house was

quiet for two days.' On the third day they again appeared before the factory, 'threatening that they would take or burn it to the ground; but Mr. Master stood in so resolute a posture, that the captain, not willing to hazard his men, with much ado kept them back, and sent a man into the house to advise Mr. Master what was fit to be done.' In consequence of this communication, a complimentary present was sent to Sevajee by two of the company's servants; he received them kindly, 'telling them that the English and he were very good friends, and, putting his hand into their hands, told them that he could do the English no wrong, and that this giving his hand was better than any *could* to oblige him thereto.' Sevajee was, in fact, desirous to conciliate the English, in order to induce them to return to Rajahpore, where they had formerly had a factory, which they had abandoned in consequence of his exactions. The loss of their trade had injured the town of Rajahpore, and diminished the Mahratta's revenue from it. Sevajee immediately afterwards left Surat. The French had saved their factory by paying a contribution. The Dutch factory was without the town, and was not attacked; and these circumstances, with the interview between Sevajee and the English, inspired the Mogul government with considerable distrust of the Europeans at Surat."

The aim of Sevajee after the spirited repulse he met with in 1670 was to conciliate the English at Surat, who maintained a cold and distant bearing to his advances, as they were afraid to compromise themselves with the Mogul, who had hitherto been so friendly to them. In order to prevent any further attempts at negotiation on the part of the Mahratta chief, they demanded compensation for injuries inflicted at Surat and various other places by him or his hordes of wild followers. To the astonishment of the English, this was conceded, and they then entered into serious negotiations with a chief whom the Mogul not only regarded as an enemy, but as a rebel. In 1674 a treaty was actually formed between the head of the Mahrattas and the president of the English factory at Surat of mutual peace and amity. Sevajee agreed to pay ten thousand pagodas as compensation for past injuries, and relinquished his right to the wrecks of vessels cast away upon his coasts, so far as those of English, or rather of the company, were concerned. The consequence of this was an intense jealousy towards the English by the Great Mogul, and an equal difficulty on the part of the former to maintain neutrality between the Moguls and the Mahrattas. It was in conse-

\* Mill's brief notice is taken, just as it stands, from Bruce.

† Sivally (*Siva laya*, the abode of Siva). This is the harbour of the Surat shipping, and is situated at the mouth of the river Tapti, twenty miles west of that city.



quence of a state of feeling in India thus arising rather than from events at home (as generally represented), although the latter had some influence also in the matter, that the court of committees in 1677-78 recommended a trimming policy to their servants in treating with all the conflicting native powers in India. Bruce thus describes the directions sent out:—"The court recommended temporising expedients to their servants with the Mogul, with Sevajee, and with the petty rajahs; but at the same they gave to President Augier and his council discretionary powers to employ armed vessels to enforce the observation of treaties and grants:—in this way the court shifted from themselves the responsibility of commencing hostilities, that they might be able, in any questions which might arise between the king and the company, to refer such hostilities to the errors of their servants."\*

Upon this quotation of Bruce, Professor Wilson thus very properly comments:—"There is a clause in these instructions omitted, which it is but justice to the directors to re-insert. They enjoined their servants 'to endeavour by their conduct to impress the natives with an opinion of the probity of the English in all commercial dealings.' With regard to the object of the court in giving discretionary powers to the president and council of Surat to enforce the observation of treaties and grants, it is not very candid to limit it to leaving an opening by which they might escape responsibility. Their own distance from the scene of action rendered some such discretionary authority in their servants indispensable, as is admitted a few lines further on." Bruce, however, was rather careless than uncandid in any omissions made by him, as even Dr. Wilson, with all his zeal to vindicate the ancient proceedings of the company on all occasions, is equalled in partiality by that writer.

Partly in the result of the treaty with Sevajee, partly from adopting the policy recommended by the court of committees at home, Surat escaped all attacks from native powers during the remainder of the seventeenth century, although early in the eighteenth century it was repeatedly assailed by Mahratta freebooters. This was important, for Surat was for a considerable time the recognised capital of commercial India; and although its native Hindoo population was always faithless and horribly immoral, the Parsee inhabitants clung to the English and other Europeans, so as to afford facilities of commerce not to be obtained elsewhere. The Parsees at that time were very numerous at

Surat,\* and they were very important as agents between the other natives, whom they well understood, and the Europeans.

In 1686-87 several of the company's agents were imprisoned at Surat by the Mogul, in consequence of piratical attacks by some English upon his ships, and generally in that quarter he was less friendly than formerly.

Towards the close of the century the piracies off Surat became more common and daring. In 1695 the emperor's chief ship, consecrated to a purpose by him esteemed holy,—that of carrying pilgrims to Mocha and Jedda, the seaports of Mecca,—was attacked by an English rover, and captured. An account of the transaction is given by a Mohammedan writer, one Khafi Khan, according to whose reluctant admissions the conduct of the English pirates was most gallant and dashing. It was in 1693 that the vessel was made a prize, while carrying eighty guns and four hundred muskets, by which is probably meant not that muskets were a part of the cargo, but of the armament. "An English vessel of small size" bore down upon the Mogul leviathan, and a battle took place. A gun having burst on board the emperor's ship was the occasion, Khafi Khan declares, of the English being able to board, which they did, in spite of all the odds of numbers and of armament; "and although," adds Khafi, "the Christians have no courage with the sword, in consequence of mismanagement the vessel was taken."

Upon this event Mohammedan India literally raged against "the sacrilegious Giaours." At Surat and Swally the emperor, unable in any other way to prevent the multitude from murdering the English, placed them, to the number of sixty-three, in irons.

The emperor discreetly sought redress by sending to the English president at Bombay an envoy. This person was the historian, Khafi Khan. He represents his reception to have been with great honour, but rather sneeringly refers to the display of military power which the president thought proper to make. He praises the business ability and good sense of the English council, but expresses his surprise at the spirit in which persons so grave, and on an occasion so important, laughed at the way in which the crew of the little English ship took possession of the emperor's chief man-of-war. Having received explanation that the aggressors were pirates, who would be hanged if caught, and pacific assurances having been profusely made, the envoy returned to the Mogul viceroy at Surat. The English authorities immediately

\* See chapter on the Relation of the Parsees to Indian History.

\* Bruce, vol. ii. p. 406.



offered a reward of one thousand pounds for Captain Avery, by whom it was supposed the daring exploit was performed, although some attributed it to Captain Kidd, who had been at that time off Swally. Kidd continued to cruise about, but the pursuit of Avery was so hot in consequence of the reward, that he made for the Bahamas, where his ship was sold, and the crew dispersed. Several of them were, however, arrested and hanged. Matters were arranged with the emperor, but Kidd made so many captures of native and European vessels off the mouth of the Tapty, that peaceful relations between the chief factor at Surat and the viceroy were soon interrupted, and the English traders were exposed to the reprisals of the native government.

When these events were passing at Surat another portion of the strip of territory, afterwards known as the Bombay presidency, was the scene of transactions of great importance. That theatre of events was the Island of Bombay, its dependent islets, and the vicinity of the bay.

While the Dutch in the Archipelago were successfully evading the stipulations imposed by Cromwell when they solicited peace from that conqueror, the Portuguese were acting a similar part, but still more treacherous and dishonest, at Bombay. After the death of Cromwell the Dutch lost all hesitation about breaking the treaty; and while they were treating the authority of Charles II. with contempt, or bribing his connivance at their frauds, even the Portuguese did not think themselves too feeble to resist the prerogatives of the English king, and through him the nation he so weakly ruled. The Island of Bombay having (as related on previous pages) become the property of Charles, as the dowry of the Infanta Catherine of Portugal, whom he married, he sent the Earl of Marlborough to take possession. Five hundred soldiers were also sent to occupy the island as a garrison, with its dependencies, Salsette and Tanna. The Portuguese governor refused to deliver over these islands, as they were not named in the treaty. It was urged upon the governor that the islands in question were so situated that the occupation of them by the troops of any other nation would render the Island of Bombay insecure to its possessors. He replied that his government could never have framed a treaty which would open Bascoin to another nation. He finally refused to give up Bombay until further instructed by his own government, inasmuch as the letters or patent produced by Lord Marlborough did not comport with the usages of Portugal.

The troops brought out by the English ships were so cooped up, that disease broke

out among them, and made mortal havoc. Their commander, Sir Abraham Shipman, requested the chief of the English factory at Surat to allow them to land there. He dared not undertake such a responsibility, as it might excite the jealousy of the natives to see so large a force landing in their country. The Earl of Marlborough returned home to report to his government. Sir Abraham Shipman landed his troops on the small island of Anjediva, twelve miles distant from Goa. This situation they found unhealthy, and fresh provisions could with difficulty be obtained. Sir Abraham offered the rights of the crown to the company through their agents at Surat. They refused to accept them, because they could not occupy the island *pro tempore* in proper force, and as a permanent possession they were not authorized to receive it, nor did they consider him authorized to bestow it. Sir Abraham and three hundred and eighty-one of his troops fell victims to "the distemper." The residue were permitted, in December, 1664, to take possession of the Island of Bombay, under the command of an officer named Cook. The eventual cession of the island to the company seems to have arisen from the fact that the king found it an expense too heavy to be borne, and "making a virtue of necessity," he bestowed it upon those by whom he desired to serve himself in other ways.\* Mr. Cook, the commander of the little body of infantry, assumed the office of first governor. He found the island nearly a desert, the Portuguese having done nothing to improve so admirable a position. On the 5th of November, 1666, Sir Gervaise Lucas arrived as governor. Sir Gervaise died on the 21st of March, and was succeeded by the deputy-governor, Captain Henry Geary. Mr. Cook, the first governor, had been incensed at being superseded by a governor from England; and as soon as Sir Gervaise died, assisted by the Jesuits, Cook collected a force at Salsette, in order to re-establish himself by force. The attempt failed, through the firmness of Captain Geary, and the fidelity of a portion of the little garrison. On the 23rd of September, 1668, the island was taken possession of in the name of the East India Company by Sir George Oxenden, the company's governor at Surat. The troops were transferred from the king's to the company's service, along with the arms, ordnance, and stores. Soon after it came into possession of the company the revenue rose to £2823 per annum, and in a year after that it more than doubled. Sir George Oxenden died on the 14th of July, 1669, and was succeeded in his

\* For a description of the Island of Bombay and its vicinity, see chap. vii. pp. 138—145.



office by Mr. Gerald Augier, as chief of the factory at Surat, and governor of Bombay. Under his auspices the revenue rose to £6490 per annum. In 1672 a powerful Dutch fleet appeared off Bombay, and reconnoitred; at that time the garrison did not consist of more than a hundred English soldiers, about as many friendly Portuguese, an equal number of natives, and a small party of French refugees and deserters. The Dutch did not effect any hostile purpose. Possibly they were deterred by the spirited efforts of the governor and the inhabitants, who enrolled themselves as a militia. Several of them were Germans, and received especial praise from the officials for their soldierlike bearing and good conduct. Five hundred Rajpoots were hired, and presented a gallant appearance to the reconnoitring Dutch. In 1674 the fortifications were repaired and strengthened. To the twenty-one cannons which the company found there a hundred were added. The regular troops were four hundred, "of whom the greater part were topasses,"\* and there was an enrolled and disciplined militia of three hundred. The mint was established at Bombay in 1676, letters patent having arrived from the king empowering the company to coin 'rupees, pice, and budgerooks.'

During the government of Mr. Augier the Mahratta pirates infested the bay. The governor died, 1676, and was succeeded by Henry Oxenden.

Among the difficulties with which the settlement had to contend were the menacing power of the Emperor Aurungzebe, and that of the Mahrattas then rapidly rising to importance. Nevertheless, the place prospered, so that according to Mr. Grant the revenue at this time reached more than £12,000 per annum. The Portuguese and Dutch were bitterly opposed to this settlement. The Danes and French soon became rivals also.

The rising authority of the Mahrattas gave much uneasiness at Bombay in 1679, and the jealousy of that power, and of any relations maintained by the English with it, which animated the Mogul, constituted another peril to the still comparatively new settlement. In that year Sevajee seized the Island of Henery, and the Siddee seized the Island of Kenery as a counterpoise. The English were endangered by both proceedings, but knew not well how to oppose either, because they were alike to be apprehended, and a junction with either party for any purpose must involve a war. The Siddee was considered the stronger, yet the less formidable neighbour. "Siddee, or Secdee, is a corruption of an Arabic term, signifying a lord; but in the common language

of the Deccan, it came to be applied indiscriminately to all natives of Africa. The Siddees of Jinjera took their name from a small fortified island in the Concan, where a colony had been formed on a jaghire, granted, it appears, in the first instance, to an Abyssinian officer, by the King of Ahmednuggur, on condition of the maintenance of a marine for the protection of trade, and the conveyance of pilgrims to the Red Sea. The hostility of Sevajee induced the Siddee, or chief, to seek favour with Aurungzebe, by whom he was made admiral of the Mogul fleet, with an annual salary of four lacs of rupees (£40,000) for convoying pilgrims to Jedda and Mocha. The emperor himself sent an annual donation to Mecca of three lacs."\*

Sevajee died in 1680, which for a time relieved the British very much from their uneasiness in connection with the Mahrattas. In 1681, Mr. John Child, brother of Sir Josiah Child, an influential member of the court of committees, was appointed president of Surat, with a council of eight members; one of the junior councillors, Mr. Ward, was designated deputy-governor of Bombay.

In 1683 Bombay was created an independent English settlement, and in 1684 the chief seat of the power and trade of the English in the East Indies. Before it arrived at so great a distinction, however, it was the scene of a memorable mutiny, which prevented the arrangement from being carried out for several years. Up to the time of this revolt, the East India Company had expended on Bombay, its harbour, improvements, and fortifications, £300,000.† Captain Keigwin, who commanded the garrison, assisted by Ensign Thompson, and supported by the troops, consisting of one hundred and fifty regulars, and two hundred topasses, and headed by the inhabitants, seized on the island in the name of the British crown. Captain Keigwin, not only deposed, but imprisoned the deputy-governor, and was himself chosen to the office of governor with acclamation by the troops, militia, and inhabitants. The captain issued a proclamation, in which he set forth the misdeeds of the company. Mr. Ward applied by secret agents to Mr. Child, the governor of Surat, who was unable to afford him assistance. Meanwhile, Captain Keigwin applied the revenues of the island scrupulously to the support of the troops and civil government in the name of the King of England. The new governor and the inhabitants sent home complaints to the king against Mr. Child, whose oppressions and tyranny were the alleged oc-

\* Duff's *Mahrattas*.

† Hamilton's *Hindustan*. Murray, Albemarle Street.

\* Half-caste Portuguese and Indians.



casion of a revolt which took so loyal a form. Dr. Cook Taylor sums up the character of John Child and his brother Sir Josiah, as exemplified by their conduct from 1684 to 1688, and the consequences of their misdeeds, in the following terms:—"Unfortunately, their prosperity (that of the company) was greatly injured by one of their own servants, Sir John Child, governor of Bombay, whose fraud, ambition, and tyranny brought the settlement to the very verge of ruin. His folly led him to provoke a war with the Emperor of Delhi, who sent a considerable force to attack Bombay. Child's cowardice was as conspicuous as any of his other qualities, and the fort must have fallen, had not his seasonable death relieved the garrison from the greatest of dangers, an imbecile and treacherous commander. On Child's death, the Emperor Aurungzebe consented to make peace, and granted more favourable terms than the English had a right to expect. Child's successors were little better than himself; so great were their profligacy and rapacity, that from being a populous place, Bombay was almost rendered a desert; it would most probably have been abandoned altogether, if the company's servants could have found means of escaping from the insolence and oppression of their governors by returning to England; but this favour was refused them, and they were detained by their tyrants, without a glimmering of hope. In consequence of this misgovernment abroad, and the speculation introduced by Sir Josiah Child into the management at home, the company's affairs fell into sad confusion, and the merchants of London proposed either to throw open the trade with India and China, or to form a new commercial association on a wider basis."

Miss Martineau, commenting upon the spirit and temper of the directors and agents at this period, says—"The wisest men among them, during the reigns of the Stuarts, seem to have entertained a true royal contempt for constitutional law, and a great relish for freedom of will and hand in executive matters. In the early history of the company there are no greater names than those of the brothers Sir Josiah and John Child. These gentlemen were full of sense, information, vigour, and commercial prudence; yet Sir Josiah has left us an account of his notions which reads strangely at this day." The fair authoress then quotes, on the authority, no doubt, of Captain Hamilton,\* a reply of Sir Josiah Child to Mr. Vaux, governor of Bombay, in

\* Hamilton adds to the passage quoted by Miss Martineau, "I am the more particular on this account, because I saw and copied both those letters in anno 1696, while Mr. Vaux and I were prisoners at Surat, on account of Captain Evory's [Avery] robbing the Mogul's great ship, the *Gunsway*."

1692, when the latter declared he would act towards interlopers according to the laws of England. Sir Josiah wrote roundly to Mr. Vaux, what amounted to an assertion of the supreme authority of the company even over the prerogatives of the crown and the laws of England. The injunctions of Sir Josiah were too faithfully carried out by his brother, whose notions of the company's privileges were still more arbitrary.

Whether the conduct of Mr. John, afterwards Sir John, Child, merited the hatred borne to him at Bombay, the feeling was general among all the company's servants and the inhabitants in 1684, so that Captain Keigwin rode triumphantly upon the storm. The king and the Duke of York looked rather favourably upon the statements of Keigwin, and the company espoused thoroughly all the doings and misdoings of Sir John Child. Dr. St. John was sent out by the king to investigate matters, and the company sent privately an agent of its own. Child also proceeded in person from Surat, but the new governor and his confederates would enter into no negotiations with him. Sir Thomas Grantham was dispatched with a naval squadron to take possession of the island, but Captain Keigwin refused to surrender it, except upon condition of free pardon and liberty to return home for himself and his followers, alleging that what he had done was done honestly, for the king's honour, and the cause of law and justice. The admiral accepted the terms offered by the gallant and loyal insurgent, and on the 20th of November, 1684, the fort was surrendered. It was evident that the royal authorities and those of the company viewed Keigwin's conduct in a different light, but that the latter deemed it their interest to condone his offences against them. During his government he displayed some activity, having opened negotiations with Rajah Sambajee, and finally concluded a treaty with him by which he recovered twelve thousand pagodas due to the company. This must have pleased them well, for in the year 1685 they confirmed the treaty.

In 1686 the chief government of the company in India removed from Surat, as had been previously determined, to Bombay. Sir John Child was appointed President, Captain-General, and Admiral of the East India Company's forces by land and sea, from Cape Comorin to the Gulf of Persia. Sir John began exercise of his new authority by putting down interlopers, with whom he dealt in the precise spirit of the letter of his brother, Sir Josiah, to Mr. Vaux, already mentioned. Mr. Mill vindicates the interlopers, as does Smith in his able work, but Dr. Wilson



pertinently says in reply to the former—"It would appear, from the way in which these interlopers are spoken of, that they were unconnected merchants, seeking only to carry on trade with India on the principles of individual adventure and free competition. It seems, however, that they attempted more than this, representing themselves as a new company, chartered by the king, whose purpose it was to deprive the old of their privileges. They endeavoured also to establish themselves permanently at various places in the Deccan, and offered to the King of Golconda fifteen thousand pagodas for permission to erect a fort at Armagan. It was not without cause, therefore, that the company regarded them with fear, and endeavoured to suppress their commerce." Both the Brothers Child are accused, with some appearance of probability, of having desired to inflict capital punishment upon Englishmen who "interloped;" and of a desire to create in the name of the company a pure despotism over Englishmen within the bounds of sea and land, where their charter gave them any authority. Sir Josiah laid it down, in his communications with his brother, as an essential feature of their future policy, that all injuries inflicted by native princes upon the company's property or servants should be retaliated, and that force of arms should be more relied upon in all future differences with the rajahs of territories contiguous to those of the company. These directions of Sir Josiah's influenced Sir John largely in the career which Dr. Cooke Taylor denounces with such unqualified severity.

In 1687, Sir John Child being dead, Mr. Harriss was appointed in his place, but the new governor was then a prisoner to the Mogul at Surat, and was not liberated until the ensuing year.

The Dutch having erected Batavia and Colombo into regencies, the English conferred the same title upon the settlement of Bombay in 1687.

War broke out between the company and the Mogul, arising from the efforts of the former, in Bengal, to retaliate for injuries alleged to have been inflicted by the emperor's officers and subjects. The circumstances which led to it will be detailed elsewhere; here, for the reader's convenience, limiting the narrative of its events to Bombay, it may be observed that Sir John Child deliberately provoked this war, with the intention, if it succeeded, of avowing himself to have done so as the agent of the court of committees, which was in effect his brother Josiah, but if he failed, his plan was to declare that he had acted on his own responsibility, so that the company might disown him, and again solicit,

on the ground of their repudiation of all his proceedings, to be restored to the Mogul's favour, and to their former position in matters of trade. This policy has been condemned by most historians as immoral, but several historical advocates of the company have defended it, as expedient and prudent, under the peculiar and exceptionable circumstances in which Sir John Child was placed; others deny or throw doubt upon the accuracy of the representations made of Sir John's motives and policy. In consequence of that policy, "the Siddee's fleet" (the fleet of the Mogul admiral) attacked Bombay, taking possession of Mahim Mazagong and Sion, and shutting up the governor and garrison in the castle. The Siddee was on this occasion provided with a choice body of Mogul troops. In 1689 an order came from Aurungzebe to his admiral to withdraw his soldiers, but this was not done until the 22nd of June, 1690. The Siddee was very anxious to prosecute the siege, because he regarded the English as at heart the allies of his old enemies, the Mahrattas. He also tarried so long, in hopes of a certain conquest, having been inspired by the Portuguese Jesuits, who at first covertly and then openly abetted the invaders. On the withdrawal of the enemy, the lands which the Jesuits had been permitted to hold were confiscated, in punishment for their treason.

From 1691 to 1693 the plague raged at Bombay, so that at the beginning of the last-named year only three of the company's civil servants remained alive.

In 1694 Sir John Gayer arrived as governor. The condition in which he found "the regency" led him to make a report concerning it in his despatches home, which represented it as in a deplorable condition. It had not recovered the effect of the desperate policy of Sir John Child, and since his death it had incurred new disasters. The proceedings of the English pirates were most daring, especially against the ships of the Mogul. Aurungzebe demanded that the regency should make good all the losses which those pirates inflicted upon his own navy, and upon the coasting ships of his subjects. To meet these demands the treasury was exhausted, and the council exposed to perpetual apprehension of a new declaration of war by the Mogul. Sir John Gayer was unable to provide any remedy against the evils which prevailed. In 1698 Sir Nicholas Waite was appointed resident at Surat by the new or English Company, already referred to in the narrative of the home history of the East India Company, and he immediately directed his energies against Sir John and his council. His endeavours were in-



cessant to persuade the officers of the Mogul that the agents of the old company were rebels against their own sovereign, and entertained hostile designs against the emperor. In 1700 he succeeded, by his intrigues, in procuring the imprisonment of Sir John Gayer and Mr. Colt. While these intrigues were in progress, and before they had arrived at that result, the English pirates took advantage of the collision between the two companies, and literally made war on their own account. In 1698 they appeared off Cape Comorin with two frigates and a number of swift sailing ships of smaller dimensions, manned by most daring and reckless men, under the command of Captain Kidd, who was afterwards taken and hanged. Also three other piratical frigates cruised, one of fifty guns, one of forty, and one of thirty, all English built, with English crews, and commanded by English captains. These robber ships intercepted all vessels, and made havoc of the native coasters for a considerable time with impunity. These were not the only enemies of the suffering settlement. Its old enemies, the Mahrattas, kept it in a state of constant alarm. The Portuguese, who always regarded the cession of Bombay to the English as an event injurious to their nation and their religion, were not too weak to menace and insult the feeble settlement; the Jesuits, whose property had been confiscated, the Portuguese resident on the island, and even the half-castes, were ready to rise in revolt upon the appearance of a Portuguese force, and correspondence with the Portuguese stations, stimulating an attack, was constantly carried on.

The Arabs fitted out several fast sailing ships, which entered the bay repeatedly, inflicting variety of mischief; and these also had complicity with certain Arabs residing on the island. The English had at first encouraged settlers of all creeds and nations, but the harsh government of Sir John Child had turned them all into rebels.

Even these miseries did not complete the frightful catalogue. The plague, already referred to, had scarcely passed away, when pestilence of another kind spread over the island. The uncultivated land was in a marshy state, and had for some time spread malaria to a certain extent; that extent widened, until the whole island became the sphere of its morbid influence.

The disturbance of the Deccán, during the long reign of Aurungzebe, kept large armies of the emperor's, and numerous bodies of the active and desperate Mahrattas, continually marching to and fro; and this circumstance left the English, both at Bombay and Surat,

in a state of uncertainty, from which they were favoured with few intervals of relief, as to how far the policy of the contending hosts might not involve their factories and the Island of Bombay within the whirlwind of war.

In the last decade of the seventeenth century, while the British were put to a severe trial in Bombay, the new and fearfully fatal malady, already referred to, visited the place, and the Europeans, civil and military, were all but annihilated. At this conjuncture the Parsees behaved with prudence and courage. The Seedees of Jinjeera were invading Bombay, and the island and Fort St. George, then called Dungenry Fort, fell speedily into their hands. An eminent Parsee, a shipwright, named Rustom Dorab, contributed much to save the island to the British. He placed himself at the head of the fishermen, then a numerous caste, organized them, attacked and defeated the invaders, followed up his successes, and drove the enemy back. He at the same time sent despatches to the head of the British factory at Surat, who, hastening to Bombay, took upon himself the government. The loyal and intrepid Parsee was rewarded by appointments of honour and profit. Some account having been given of this transaction in the chapter on the Parsees, it is unnecessary to notice it further here than to say that during the various trials from pestilence and war during the last ten years of the century at Bombay, the Parsees and the Armenian Christians displayed both loyalty and courage.

Having noted the history of events at Surat and Bombay, the chief stations of the company during the period now treated, the reader's attention is directed to the progress of affairs at another of the stations which had assumed importance, and was destined to occupy a powerful position in the future dominions of the company. The settlement of Fort George, at Madras, was noticed in a previous chapter. In 1653 it was raised to the rank of a presidency. In 1661 Sir Edward Winter was appointed chief agent; but in 1665 a Mr. George Fowcroft was nominated in his place, when Sir Edward Winter exemplified the spirit of discord which then prevailed among the company's agents, and the rude lawlessness so frequently evinced by them, for he seized and imprisoned the gentleman nominated to succeed him, and retained by force Fort George until the 22nd of August, 1668, when he delivered it up to commissioners from England, on condition of receiving a full pardon for all offences. Mr. Fowcroft then assumed the government, which he retained until



1671, when he was succeeded by Sir William Langhorn, in which year the sovereign of the Carnatic made over to the company his share in the customs of Madras, for a fixed rent of twelve hundred pagodas per annum. In 1680 Mr. William Gifford was appointed governor of Fort St. George; and in 1683 he was appointed president of both Madras and the company's stations in Bengal. In 1686 Mr. Yule was nominated to the presidency of Madras, the Bengal stations being no longer under its direction. On December 12th, 1687, the population of Fort St. George, the city of Madras, and the villages within the territory of the company "were reported in the public letter to be three hundred thousand."\*

In 1686 Madras was formed into a corporation, to consist of a mayor and ten aldermen, of whom three were to be servants of the company, and seven natives; the list of burgesses was to comprise a hundred and twenty names. According to Bruce† the aldermen were to be justices of the peace, and to wear their scarlet gowns, and the burgesses black silk gowns; much ceremony was to be observed in conducting the affairs of the corporation, and great pomp in their processions. It was found impossible, however, to constitute the corporation on the wide and liberal base intended. The Mussulman population hated the English too fiercely to be entrusted; the Portuguese were deterred by their priests, whose hostility was as great as that of "the Moors." The Jews left the place rather than have anything to do with the corporation; and the Armenians, whom the English wished chiefly to employ, declined acting. The causes of this appear to have been, a hope retained by the Mohammedans of expelling the English; and an indisposition on the part of the minor sects and parties to commit themselves, as in such case the conquerors would probably hold them accountable. Some lingering hope also pervaded the Portuguese that their nation would one day regain its ascendancy, and that in the meantime their proper task was to sow dissatisfaction in the minds of all other parties against that which was dominant. The tyranny of the English, and the self-will of the presidents, no doubt also deterred many from joining in anything English in its character. The Hindoo population, ever anxious in those days to play off any other power against the Mohammedans, were willing to co-operate.

The governor offered an alliance to the King of Golconda against the Dutch, with whom his majesty was at war. This was done with the object of ultimately obtaining

from him a firman to coin rupees, and the cession of St. Thomas.

During all this time the Dutch scoured the Coromandel coast, sometimes seizing ships as buccaneers, at other times at war with the natives. The native chiefs along that coast were then also constantly at war with one another. The Carnatic, in which Madras is situated, was especially disturbed. All these circumstances circumscribed the English trade at Madras, and caused uneasiness in Fort St. George. The Mogul made war upon the King of Golconda and the neighbouring princes. The company's agents at Madras were desirous to resist the pretensions of the Mogul, but in the end tamely submitted, and petitioned for the same privileges as they had enjoyed under the previous ruler, which were granted. Sir John Child was so opposed to a policy of peace as to censure the agents of the Madras presidency, in bitter terms, for hesitating to believe that the English must ultimately conquer. The events brought about by Sir John himself, the utter inadequacy of his means to assert his pretensions, proved that the agents at Fort St. George knew better than he did the requisites of their peculiar situation: this will, however, appear more fully when noticing the contest in Bengal and along the western shores of its bay, brought about by the violence and ambition of Sir John. In 1691 Governor Yule was dismissed, and Mr. Higginson succeeded him, who was replaced in 1696 by Mr. Thomas Pitt, under whose presidency Madras witnessed the end of the seventeenth century. During his government the revenue of the territory amounted to forty thousand pagodas per annum. During the whole period, from the erection of Fort St. George, gunpowder was an important item in the cargoes of the vessels "outward bound" from England to the presidency.

During the progress of the events recorded, the Madras agents were engaged in making various settlements: among these were Ten-gayapatam, or Tegnapatam, a small town in Travancore on the sea-coast, thirty-two miles west-north-west from Cape Comorin, latitude  $8^{\circ} 17'$  north, longitude  $77^{\circ} 22'$  east; and Vizagapatam, or Vizigapatam, latitude  $17^{\circ} 42'$  north, longitude  $83^{\circ} 24'$  east. The latter place was first founded, and suffered severely during the war which Sir John Child, on his own authority, carried on with the Emperor Aurungzebe. So confused are the chronicles of this period, that it is difficult to say in what year the place was settled. At Semachellum, near to it, was a Hindoo temple of great reputed sanctity, whose shrine was frequented by numerous devotees. There

\* Hamilton's *Hindustan*, vol. ii. p. 414.

† Vol. ii. 593 659; and iii. 111, 156.



is some fine elevated ground about it, a range of hills lying near it. A bay is formed by a promontory, fifteen hundred feet high; the vicinity is picturesque. It was the capital of a district of the same name, situated in the Northern Circars. The travelling distance from Madras was four hundred and eighty-three miles. Here, and in Tegnapatam, the English encouraged the settlement of Armenians, who acted as agents between them and the natives, journeying far inland and finding customers for goods, and obtaining commissions for goods and produce. Soon after the peace with Aurungzebe, Tegnapatam was settled, and a fort built there, called Fort St. David. A little to the north of it the French had formed a settlement, called Pondicherry, which gave the English some uneasiness, as the French were fiercely hostile.\* The ground at Fort St. David's was purchased from the Mahratta sovereign, Rajah Ram. Aurungzebe, to testify his forgiveness of the late war made upon him, permitted the Mogul authorities of the Carnatic to favour the purchase and the erection of the fort. "The wall and bulwarks were good and strong."

The proceedings of the company's agents in Bengal involved the Madras stations in the vortex of war and suffering; the remaining items of the history of those stations are comprised in the events which succeeded each other so rapidly on the Bengal coasts and the Hoogly River.

In 1674 the trade of Bengal had grown to such importance, that a separate agency was established to conduct it; but for ten years after that event the trade suffered much from the peculation and oppression of the native authorities. In 1685 the determination was formed by the supreme English authority in India to put an end to these oppressions. The greatest force which had ever appeared in the service of the company was employed for this purpose. Ten vessels, armed with from twelve to seventy guns, sailed under the command of Captain Nicholson, who had also six companies of infantry. The first object of this officer was directed to be the seizure and fortification of Chittagong, as a place to serve for security in case of reverse, and as a *point d'appui* in any aggressive operations against the Mogul, or petty chiefs of Bengal. In addition to this force the directors of committees made application to the king for "an entire company of regular infantry, with their officers." So badly was the expedition timed, that the ships arrived at their destination in a

desultory way; and before a sufficient force was collected, an untoward circumstance brought on a conflict, which, so far as the English were concerned, was premature and unfortunate. A quarrel occurred about some trifling matter between three English soldiers and the peons of Shaista Khan, the Mogul's *soubahdar*, or governor, of Bengal. This occurred in October, 1680. The fleet, under Captain Nicholson, attacked the town of Hoogly, five hundred houses were burned, and much of the property of the citizens destroyed. This led the governor to sue for peace, to which the English assented, but on terms so preposterously exacting as to amount to a rejection of the overtures. The whole transaction and its results are thus briefly narrated by Bruce:—"Three English soldiers had quarrelled with the peons of the nawab, and had been wounded; a company of soldiers was called out in their defence, and finally the whole of the troops. The native forces collected to oppose them were routed, the town was cannonaded by the ships, and the foudar was compelled to solicit a cessation of arms, which was granted on condition of his furnishing means of conveying the company's goods on board their vessels. Before the action took place orders had come from Shaista Khan to compromise the differences with the English, but their claims had now become so considerable, amounting to above sixty-six lacs of rupees, or nearly £700,000, that it was not likely they expected the nawab's acquiescence. They remained at Hoogly till the 20th of December, and then, 'considering that Hoogly was an open town, retired to Chutanuttee, or Calcutta, from its being a safer situation during any negotiation with the nabob or Mogul.' Negotiations were accordingly opened and terms agreed upon, when, in February, the nawab threw off the mask, and a large body of horse appeared before Hoogly."

On this occasion the factory was defended with undaunted spirit. Repeated assaults were made, but the English, headed by the agent, Job Charnock, repulsed the nawab's\* forces, stormed the fort of Tanna, seized the Island of Injellee, where they strongly fortified themselves, and destroyed Balasore with fire, together with forty ships of the emperor's fleet.

On the other hand, the factories of Patna and Cossimbazar were plundered by the Mogul soldiery, and the residents carried into the interior. In September, 1687, peace was made, and the English were allowed to go back to Hoogly on their former privileges. The company was, however, dissatisfied with

\* Chapters will be devoted to the rise of the French and other East India Companies formed on the continent. Separate chapters have been already given to the Portuguese and Dutch.

\* From the Persian, *nawab*, a deputy (of the Mogul)



the want of success, and accused Charnock of fighting for his own interests rather than those of the company. The loss of Cossimbazar particularly irritated the court of committees, and they ordered Sir John Child to proceed to Bengal and negotiate for its recovery. This command was so well executed that everything appeared to be on the point of adjustment, when Captain Heath arrived from England in a large ship named the *Defence*, and accompanied by a frigate. Heath arrived in October, 1688, and went up to Calcutta, where he took the company's servants on board. On the 29th of November he arrived at Balasore, and instantly attacked the place, contrary to the advice of the English authorities; he alleging that he had orders from home to make war upon the Mogul. Having plundered Balasore, he proceeded to Chittagong, but the strenuous persuasives of "the council" induced him to allow communications to be made to the nabob before commencing hostilities. He appears to have been of an impatient and hasty temperament, for he did not wait for the result of those negotiations, but sailed away to Arracan, where he made fruitless efforts to establish a settlement. He then carried the agents and property of the company to Madras, where he arrived in March, 1689.\* These events exasperated the emperor, and led to the painful incidents at Surat and Bombay, already recorded in this chapter. Aurungzebe, in fact, sent orders to his deputies and commanders to drive the English out of his dominions. Muchtar Khan, the viceroy of Gujerat, ordered the goods of the company at Surat to be sold, demanded five lacs of rupees as indemnity for the burnings, destruction, and plunder in Bengal, and offered a very great sum for the capture of Sir John Child, or the production of his dead body. The English were finally obliged to sue for peace at the close of 1688. The Mogul at first seemed indisposed to accept any terms, but a due regard to his treasury, exhausted by his numerous wars, induced him to listen to the overtures of the English. The death of Sir John Child removed any animosity which the emperor retained, and he became willing to treat the English as traders, resorting to his dominions for commerce with his permission; but as territorial lords he had a repugnance to their presence. Indeed, he had no objection to any of the European peoples as traders, but he was resolved to make them all feel that he alone was lord of India. In February, 1689, a new firman was granted, after incessant and humble importunity on the part of the English, restoring to

them the imperial favour, and permission to trade, on condition that they made good the losses inflicted upon his subjects. The preamble of this document sets forth that it is given because the English entreated pardon for the crimes they had committed, and promised amendment. The concluding paragraph stipulates for the execution of the firman "that Mr. Child, who did the disgrace, be turned out and expelled." The emperor did not then know of the illness or death of the chief offender, thus specifically condemned. Yet, whatever the faults of Sir John, and of the agents who seconded his policy, the provocations and injuries received by the English were very great. Shaista was an inexorable extortioner; and wherever the English held a station in Bengal, this man, under the pretence of service to the Mogul, robbed them by dues, duties, and imposts, which had a form of legality, and were substantially unjust. Stewart depicts this man as a villain of the blackest character. Professor Wilson leans to the Mohammedan testimonies, which exalt him as "the lily of perfection." Mr. Mill admits, notwithstanding the severity of his censures upon Sir John Child and the company, that the English were in no part of India so wronged and oppressed as in Bengal.

The English now for a season became exceedingly deferential to the Mogul. No western people are more respectful to power than the English, while none so doggedly maintain the power they acquire. The directors of committees were not turned from their purpose of gaining territory. Sir Josiah Child was still the chief man among them, and he was not daunted by the defeat and death of his brother. To gain a footing upon the soil of India he believed to be essential to a profitable commerce with India, and the best means of retrieving the company's pecuniary disasters, and he resolved, *per fas et nefas*, to accomplish this resolve.

A very important acquisition was made in Bengal during the contest waged with the nabob. During the conflicts at Hoogly in 1687, the gallant and skilful Job Charnock took possession of Chutanutty, a village about twenty-four miles down the river. This position he considered less exposed than Hoogly. According to Bruce, when peace with the nabob was obtained, that functionary ordered Mr. Charnock to go back to Hoogly, and remove the agents and property of the company thither. This author asserts that they were allowed to have some footing there, but were forbidden to build with brick or stone. Mill represents the first occupancy of Chutanutty to have been after the peace with the

\* Bruce, vol. ii. p. 648.



nabob's great master, the Emperor Aurungzebe, and obtained by grant from him in the result of the company's "respectful behaviour and offers of service." Professor Wilson represents the matter as related above, Captain Heath having gone to Chutanutty, where the English were already settled, and taken them thence. The villages of Govindpore and Calcutta were adjacent to Chutanutty, and formed together one straggling series of connected villages. Stewart\* thus relates their occupation:—"The chief agent of the company, Job Charnock, had taken possession of Chutanutty in the contests with the nawab in 1687, and, upon the restoration of tranquillity, returned to it in 1690. The Foudjar of Hoogly sought to induce the English to return there; but they obtained leave to build a factory at Calcutta, which they preferred, as more secure and accessible to shipping. Subsequently permission was procured from Azeem-us-shan, the grandson of Aurungzebe, and governor of Bengal, to purchase the rents of the three villages named above from the zemindars who were then in charge of the collections, amounting to eleven hundred and ninety-five rupees six annas annually. The ground was, no doubt, very thinly occupied, and in great part overrun with jungle, giving to the company, therefore, lands sufficient for the erection of their factory and fort." The English prudently and by degrees erected their fort, and called it Fort William. The Emperor Aurungzebe was probably not informed of these proceedings, for while he respected the possession of forts by Europeans in any territory which he conquered, those forts having been the result of treaty, or sale, or permission to build, on the part of the monarch previously in possession of the supreme authority, yet he never himself gave permission to any Europeans to erect a fortress or fortify a position on any land of which he was sovereign. When the English first settled there, and for many years after, the place was dangerously unhealthy, from the stagnant waters and decaying vegetable matter in its vicinity, the whole district of Nuddea, of which it formed part, being both marshy and covered with jungle.

A combination of petty chiefs to overthrow the government of the nabob in 1695 gave the occasion sought by the British of insisting upon the necessity of an armed occupation of their property. The nabob on this occasion directed them to defend themselves if attacked, and they accepted the general permission as authority to fortify their position.

During the process of the insurrection the Dutch and English factories at Rajmahal

were plundered by Rehim Khan, an Afghan, one of the coalesced chiefs in arms. He also took possession of Hoogly and Moorshedabad, then also a very important place of commerce. He next attacked Chutanutty and Tanna, a place ten miles west of Calcutta. He was repulsed at the former in a severe conflict. Tanna was covered by the guns of an English frigate, at the request of the Foudjar of Hoogly, and there also the assailants met with repulse. When, in 1698, peace was established by the enforcement of the authority of Aurungzebe, the defences erected by the Europeans were allowed to remain, as they had all been used in the emperor's interest. The English in that year obtained considerable property by purchase, and became lords paramount of a district, to the whole of which they gave the name of the village of Calcutta, which, according to Stewart, is properly *Cali-cotta*, a temple dedicated to Cally, the Hindoo goddess of Time.

In 1689 the English and Dutch (in Europe) united in hostilities against the French. The naval conflicts which followed are memorable in history, and continued until the peace of Ryswick, in 1697. The French were then far behind the English, as the latter were far behind the Dutch as political economists. In the philosophy of commerce the French were especially deficient, although several eminent Frenchmen had thrown light by their opinions upon commercial science. The French in India proceeded in a manner so unwise, that their undertakings were generally misfortunes. In Europe their privateers and men-of-war so frequently captured English and Dutch East Indiamen, that the prices of French importations from India were reduced in the markets of France. During the war more than four thousand English merchantmen, many of them East Indiamen, were captured by the royal navy of Louis XIV. and the French privateers. In India and the Indian Ocean French privateers and royal cruisers inflicted serious injuries upon both Dutch and English, but more especially upon the latter. The war with France was one of the great obstructions to the company during the whole of the time it lasted. In another chapter the proceedings of the French during this century in their Eastern enterprises will be noticed, especially where English interests were affected.

Thus closed the seventeenth century upon the struggles for European dominion, and the competitions for a European commerce with the East. The characters of the various companies and nationalities engaged afford but little scope for comparison. The English, on the whole, do not appear more grasping or

\* App. xi. p. 544.



more self-willed than their competitors. Perhaps the Danes, in the comparatively small amount of business transacted by them, conducted themselves the best. They were remarkable for their concern for the religious instruction of their servants and mariners, and of the natives over whom they acquired an influence, although at first they seemed to be only intent upon gain. The Dutch were ardent Protestants as well as traders, and were almost as much opposed to the Portuguese, as upholders of the Church of Rome, as they were politically anxious to humble the Spanish and Portuguese nations, and wrest from them their trade and territory. Towards the English they were animated by a foreboding that the British nation was destined to naval pre-eminence, and they were unwilling to bow to the rising greatness of a navy, the ships of which they were so often enabled to encounter with success. The Dutch, whatever the grasping cupidity and stern hardness of their merchants and mariners as such, as a nation possessed many eminently pious and learned men, and there were great numbers of the people of Holland sincerely anxious to spread "peace on earth, and goodwill to men," and more especially to promote the proclamation of the gospel among the heathen. When the possessions of the Dutch East India Company assumed a permanent character, schools were established, churches erected, the Bible translated into the languages of the natives, and missionaries sent forth. The Portuguese were anxious to subdue by the burning fagot and the rusty pike. All peoples were, they believed, bound to render allegiance to the Roman pontiff, and they were his instruments in effecting the conquest of the East. The English paid little attention to religion. The provisions made in the charters as to chaplains and religious instruction were grossly neglected, nor could the company be induced to lay out money for such purposes. This may be accounted for partly by the objection which great numbers in England felt to the propagation of religion by state authority, public secular companies, or by any party or denomination bearing the sword. Among the company's own agents there were useful and able servants who held such views.

The relation of the English East India Company to India at the end of the century was relatively more powerful than that of any of its competitors. The Dutch were triumphant in the Archipelago, but the footing they had gained in India was comparatively feeble. Their stations were small, and, although well managed, not points likely to serve for purposes of aggression upon either the native

princes or the Europeans. It was chiefly at sea that they were strong so far as India was concerned.

The ports of chief importance occupied by the European nations in India at the end of the seventeenth century should be attentively marked by the reader, as their relative consequence formed an essential element in the changes which occurred in the century which succeeded.

The Portuguese still retained Goa, often as it had been endangered from sieges by native armies, and blockades by the Dutch. They also retained on the coasts of Western India Damaun, Choul, Bassein, and Diu, in Gujerat. Their power, however, was gone for ever. No one was so weak at the close of the seventeenth century as to fear the Portuguese. On the coasts of China they still held the Islands of Macao, Timor, and Solor.

The Dutch held many places which they had wrested from the Portuguese. On the coast of Coromandel they had Negapatam; in Bengal they had factories at Hoogly, Cosimbazar, and Patna; on the coast of Gujerat they had stations at Surat, the agents at which place superintended other agents at Agra and Ahmedabad. On the Malabar coast they occupied posts at Cochin, Quilon, Cranganore, and Cannanore. On this coast the Dutch held territory wrested from the Portuguese, and maintained military forces. Off the Madras coast the Island of Ceylon belonged to the Dutch, although the French succeeded in taking from them Trincomalee. The Hollanders were strongest in the Eastern Archipelago. Java was the location of Batavia, the most beautiful city of the Eastern world. At Malacca, Bantam, Amboyna, Banda, Ternate, Siam, Tonquin, and Macassar, they held flourishing positions, and even in Japan they alone succeeded. The Portuguese first, and afterwards the English, had been forced out of all the regions east of the Malacca Straits by the ships and troops of Holland.

The Danes held Tranquebar, the Dutch would have deprived them of it but for the assistance rendered by the English. The French held Pondicherry as their only important position. The English held many positions, the chief being Bombay, Madras, Surat, and Calcutta, then rising to importance. On the shores of Western India the British stations of importance were Bombay, Surat, the neighbouring harbour of Swally, and Baroch. The forts of Carwar, Tellicherry, and Ajengo (established within a few years of the end of the century), were situated on the Malabar coast, as was also the factory of Calicut. On the Coromandel coast there were Madras, Fort St. David, Cuddalore,



Porto Novo, Pettipolee, Masulipatam, Madapallam, Vizagapatam, and Orissa. Beyond these, eastward and northward, were Calcutta, Hoogly, Dacca, and Patna. There were various smaller positions dependent upon the larger ones which afterwards became of some importance, but it is remarkable that the positions which the English have found most valuable during their history in India to the present day were in their possession at the close of the seventeenth century. West of India there was the factory at Gombroon, in the dominions of the Shah of Persia; there were trading ports at Ispahan and Shiraz. In the neighbourhood of the Malacca Straits, and in the Eastern Archipelago, the English still held a few places of some importance. The Island of Sumatra received their chief settlements. Some others there were, such as Tonquin, not yet given up, but they were sources of weakness rather than of strength; and all would have been at the mercy of the Dutch, had not European events, either by war or alliance, checked their encroachments.

Miss Martineau has graphically sketched the general aspect of affairs as bearing upon the future relations of the English to continental India in the following terms:—"Thus were the British in India transformed, in the course of one century, from a handful of 'adventurers,' landing a cargo of goods, in a tentative way, at the mouth of the Tapti, and glad to sell their commodities and buy others on the residents' own terms, to a body of

colonists, much considered for their extensive transactions, and the powers, legislative, executive, and military, which they wielded. Whence these powers were derived, who these English were, and why they came, might be more than Aurungzebe himself could distinctly explain; and to this day the relation of our Indian empire to the British seems to be a puzzle to the inhabitants, being really anomalous in English eyes as well. But there we were, acting from three centres of authority and power, and exercising whatever influence commerce put into our hands. It was not for want of enterprise that the British had as yet no territorial power. Sir Josiah Child believed the possession of more or less territory to be necessary to the security of our commerce; and in 1686 an attempt was made to obtain a footing in Bengal by force of arms. It not only failed, but would have resulted in the expulsion of every Englishman from the Mogul's dominions, but for the importance of our commerce to Aurungzebe's treasury. Our reputation suffered by this unsuccessful prank of ambition and cupidity; but not the less did the last of the great Moguls go to his grave, knowing that he left the English established in his dominions beyond the possibility of dislodgment. They were neither subjects nor rulers in India; but such a man as Aurungzebe must have been well aware that if they were really irremovable they must sooner or later become the one or the other."

## CHAPTER LIII.

### REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

IN reviewing the events over which this history has passed, there are many things which strike the mind with great force. It will especially occur to the reader that the rise and progress of English power in India so far, bore no resemblance to the development of any other power known to history. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the English, notwithstanding recent defeat and humiliation by the Great Mogul, held various important territorial acquisitions upon the continent of India; and although the government at home had oppressed and robbed the company, alternately persecuting and petting it, now giving it exclusive privileges and anon fostering competitors, it not only survived every vicissitude, but early in the eighteenth

century assumed an attitude of strength, influence, and importance at home, which set at defiance all rivalry, and had begun to regard the revenues of its Eastern territories as more important than the prospects of its Eastern commerce. Future empire was already shadowed forth. "The narrative of an empire's rise and progress usually tells how the brook became a river, and the river became a sea; but the history of British India is peculiar and incongruous. It began without a strip of territory. A warehouse was expanded into a province; a province into an empire."\* That great result had not arrived at the period to which our history is now

\* *The English in Western India, being the early History of the Factory at Surat.* By Philip Anderson.



brought, the empire had not been formed, but the warehouse had in more than one direction expanded into a province.

It is difficult to gather material for an original and accurate record of the events of English enterprise in Asia, from its first efforts to the settled and regular character it assumed in the eighteenth century. The records of government furnish often but a meagre account, and what is furnished is in a form so dry, desultory, irregular, and to a great extent so irrelevant to the actual facts with which they had some official connection, that it is a tedious and difficult progress to analyze, separate, generalize, and reduce their substance to historical form. Bruce's work, already quoted, is the chief light of this period. With indefatigable industry he arranged the information which he thought proper to select from this source. Others, such as Orme, M'Pherson, Milburn, Mill, Walter Hamilton, Grant Duff, Kaye, Taylor, and Wilson, have followed in the footsteps of Bruce, but the labours of all have in this department been more or less partial. The personal narratives of Roe, Fryer, Fitch, Terry, Ovington, Alexander Hamilton, &c., furnish observations and inferences of much value; and the relations of their personal adventures throw an animation over the story, which the crude detail of government papers cannot supply. With all the aids thus furnished, there are many gaps which have not hitherto been filled up. The more the search is prosecuted, the more richly such labour is repaid, by enabling the historian to give a consecutive and clear relation of events which are obscure in themselves, or their origin, or consequences. However scant the sources of indisputable evidence, the meanness and commercial ignorance of the first English settlers are obvious to the student; and yet that they possessed a force of character adapted to ensure success is equally apparent. The Rev. P. Anderson, one of the latest and most painstaking chroniclers of the period of which this chapter treats, describes its records as "annals of mediocrity and weakness, sometimes of drivelling baseness. The instruments which Providence employed to create a British power in India were often of the basest metal. But such answer the same purposes as the finest in the hands of Infinite Wisdom. And though we may feel disappointed, we ought not to be surprised, when we see little to admire in the pioneers of our Eastern empire, and find that some were amongst the meanest of mankind. Yet, bad as were such agents, it will, I think, appear in this work that British power has been established by the moral force of British character. A writer of Anglo-Indian

History must indeed soil his paper with narratives from which virtue and honesty turn with disgust. But here is a distinction. Truth and sincerity have been, in the main, characteristics of the British, and the opposite vices exceptions. With the oriental races amongst whom they have been located, fraud, chicanery and intrigue have been the usual engines of state policy; truth and sincerity have been rare as flowers in a sandy soil. When British merchants or statesmen have formed compacts, given pledges, or made promises, they have usually—though not in all instances—observed their compacts, redeemed their pledges, and fulfilled their promises, and the natives have generally acknowledged this: so that, although their confidence has been sometimes misplaced, and has received a few severe shocks, they have continued to rely upon the good faith of Englishmen. On the other hand, they have rarely placed dependence on one another, and although some have been distinguished for their virtues in private life, their rule has ever been to regard each other with suspicion and distrust."

It is not in the characters, moral or intellectual, of the leading men in the promotion of English success that we best discern the elements of its accomplishment, but in the general character of the English serving in India, or directing at home. The names of Drake, Hawkins, Roe, and of others which have occurred in previous chapters, stand out with peculiar prominence; but it was the general character of the English factors, servants, and soldiers which contributed to the resources and triumphs of which the story of these chapters has been made up. The author of this history would adopt the language of the writer last quoted, when he says—"My aim is to furnish sketches of men and manners without devoting an exclusive attention to the great and illustrious. In most historical pictures, kings, statesmen and warriors stand conspicuous, whilst the multitude are grouped together, and their separate features are scarcely perceptible. But in modern ages a spirit of research has led students to inquire into the habits and characters of the many, and their minute discoveries have supplied defects in history, throwing as they do light not only upon heroes, but on man. This work is not indeed antiquarian, but yet its design is to exhumate from the graves in which they have been buried the motives and acts of individuals. As students of antiquity, by finding a bone here, a piece of tessellated pavement there, in another place some pottery or rust-eaten weapons, have caught glimpses of the Roman's domestic life and social condition; so now it is hoped that by



collecting heterogeneous facts from new and old books, and from mouldy records, we shall be able to form a museum, in which will be exhibited the social and moral condition, not only of the architects by whom the foundations were laid, and the building superintended; but also of those who were work-people in the construction of our Anglo-Indian Empire. And when expatiating 'free o'er all this scene of man,' it will be an object to show that although 'a mighty maze,' it is 'not without a plan.'"

Whatever the faults of the English in India up to the date of their interests there to which we have now arrived, they bear comparison with their competitors in courage, constancy, morality, and benevolence. No people ever pursued trade with more eagerness for the acquisition of wealth, *per fas et nefas*, than the Portuguese. Their blood-thirstiness was fierce and insatiable, not only against the natives, but against Europeans. They probably were guilty of no act more sanguinary than the massacre at Amboyna by the Dutch; but their whole career was merciless, and stained with gore. The English suffered much from this un pitying and vindictive spirit of the Portuguese, but never visited that nation with the heavy retribution which it deserved, although the opportunity was frequently afforded. No one can read the pages of Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*, Orme's *Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire*, the *Voyage de François Pyrard de Laval*, &c., without perceiving the reluctance of the English to shed blood, except in battle, or in acts of piracy, then regarded too generally as fair and open war. The ferocity of the Portuguese, even against unarmed Englishmen and captives, is equally plain on the page of history. Philip Anderson gives a melancholy account of the incarceration, and consequent mortality, at Goa, of English sailors kidnapped by the Portuguese off Surat. He thus sums up the results of his study of the travels of Pyrard and others early in the seventeenth century, as to the treatment received by Englishmen who happened to fall into the power of the Portuguese:—"Six months before he left Goa, Pyrard met another English prisoner, who seemed a person of some distinction, and had been surprised in the same way as the others, when he was taking soundings. He accused the Portuguese of savage ferocity, declaring that they had slaughtered his cousin in cold blood, and placed his head upon a pike as a trophy. His own life had been in great danger, for his captors, knowing that he had been surveying the coast, regarded him with peculiar suspicion. After a long

imprisonment he was suffered to depart. Four months after this gentlemen had been seized, the unlucky ship to which he belonged was wrecked on the coast. The crew, twenty-four in number, having contrived to reach the shore near Surat with their money and other property, were well treated by the native authorities. They then divided themselves into two parties; the more adventurous spirits making an attempt to return home by way of Tartary, the others remaining at Surat. The former were enabled by passports, which they procured at the Mogul's court, to pass through his dominions, but were not permitted to enter the country of the Tartars, and after a fruitless journey they returned to Surat. All the survivors repaired to Goa, and sailed from thence to England. Every Englishman on whom the Portuguese could lay their hands was treated by them as a prisoner, and when Laval was about to leave India, several Englishmen were actually brought on board in irons. Yet even when in this sad plight they appeared to him a proud set, who took every opportunity of showing their contempt for Frenchmen. Such was Portuguese hospitality! Shipwrecked mariners, instead of receiving from them generous fare and clothing, or at least protection and sympathy, were condemned to eat the bread and water of affliction in a dungeon, and if they survived such treatment, were sent to their own country with ignominy. Exclusiveness and illiberality are the sure forerunners of degeneracy, and the English are avenged. Being now the dominant party, they can return good for evil by blessing the descendants of these persecutors with religious toleration and political freedom."

When the Portuguese were unable openly to destroy the English, they did not scruple to resort to assassination. Thus, when Captain Best sent one Starkey, a factor of Surat, with intelligence to England of his success in founding the factory there, he was poisoned on the journey by two friars. Another of the factors, Canning, when sent with a king's letter to Agra, was attacked and wounded by robbers, and some of his escort killed; and this outrage was, upon such evidence as satisfied those most concerned, believed to have been instigated by the Portuguese. Canning, who was in constant dread of being poisoned by the Jesuits, met his death by the means he had foreseen. So intense was the cruelty of the Portuguese, that they in some instances plotted the destruction of the English, when the latter had actually rendered services demanding gratitude, and when peace existed in Europe between the Spanish and English nations. Mr. Anderson, relying upon the



accounts of Orme and M'Pherson, and more especially upon Colquhoun, describes in the following manner the ungrateful and perfidious character of the Portuguese at Surat, when, in 1615, Captain Downton arrived there with a small English squadron:—"This season Captain Nicholas Downton sustained the reputation of which Captain Best had laid the foundation. He was the chief commander, or, as such officers were then styled, 'the General' of four English ships. At Surat he found three English factors, Aldworth, Bid-dulph, and Richard Steele, the last of whom had lately come from Aleppo. His first step was to demand redress for extortion in the customs; his second was to require, like a true Englishman, that a market for beef should be established at Swally. The first application was met by evasion; the second by a declaration that beef could not be had, as the Banyas, by whom the preservation of animal life was regarded in the light of a religious duty, had paid a large sum to prevent bullocks from being slaughtered. The emperor and petty princes of the Deccan were united in an attempt to drive the Portuguese out of India, and no sooner had Downton arrived than the governor of Surat invited his co-operation. But as Portugal and her possessions were then subject to the Spanish crown, and there was peace between Spain and England, the English captain declined this invitation, which so annoyed the governor, that he in turn refused him all assistance, and on a frivolous pretext threw the English factors into prison. Downton's forbearance was but ill-requited by the Portuguese; for they falsely represented to the governor that he had consented to join them in an attack upon Surat. Their own acts, however, soon refuted this calumny. With six galleons of from four to eight hundred tons burden, three other vessels of considerable size, and sixty smaller ones, mounting in all a hundred and thirty-four pieces of ordnance, the viceroy of Goa attacked the four English ships, which could only mount eighty guns of inferior calibre. To the astonishment of the natives, the assailants were defeated as signally as in the previous year, so that their glory and renown were for ever transferred to their conquerors."

That the Portuguese were capable of such atrocity towards the English may be judged by the testimony to their cowardice, avarice, and absence of all principle among themselves, borne by one who could have had no motive to scandalize them. Abbé Raynal lived long in India, and was well acquainted with the character of the natives and of the European settlers. He held intimate relations with the

English, forming among them friendships which he cherished with tenacity. His profession as a Roman Catholic priest gave him opportunity of knowing at least equally well the Portuguese. But the Abbé was not such a bigot as to sacrifice truth in his estimate of either English or Portuguese, and thus he depicts the latter:—"No Portuguese pursued any other object than the advancement of his own interest; there was no zeal, no union for the common good. Their possessions in India were divided into three governments, which gave no assistance to each other, and even clashed in their projects and interests. Neither discipline, subordination, nor the love of glory animated either the soldiers or the officers. Men-of-war no longer ventured out of the ports; or whenever they appeared, were badly equipped. Manners became more and more depraved. Not one of their commanders had power enough to restrain the torrent of vice; and the majority of these commanders were themselves corrupted. The Portuguese at length lost all their former greatness, when a free and enlightened nation, actuated with a proper spirit of toleration, appeared in India, and contended with them for the empire of that country."

That a people thus debased among themselves were capable of any injustice, ingratitude or cruelty to the men of other nations may be easily believed. That the Portuguese failed utterly to establish a moral influence in the East, that could compare with that which the English were enabled to set up, is admitted by modern Roman Catholic writers of eminence in review of the entire oriental history of Portugal and the entire colonial history of Spain, with which Portugal was so intimately connected in so important a portion of her oriental career. M. Montalembert, the distinguished French nobleman and senator, whose zeal for Roman Catholicism is so ardent, thus notices the oriental and colonial career of the two nations of the Iberian Peninsula, seen from a religious, moral, and utilitarian point of view:—"It is not the general, but the colonial policy of England which is now in question, and it is precisely in this latter that the genius of the British people shines with all its lustre; not, certainly, that it has been at all times and in all places irreproachable, but it has ever and everywhere equalled, if it have not surpassed, in wisdom, justice, and humanity all the other European races which have undertaken similar enterprises. It must be confessed that the history of the relations of Christian Europe with the rest of the world since the Crusades is not attractive. Unfortunately, neither the virtues nor the truths of Christianity have ruled the



successive conquests won in Asia and America by the powerful nations of the West. After that first impetuous advance, so noble and so pious, of the fifteenth century, which fathered the great, the saintly Columbus, and all the champions of the maritime and colonial history of Portugal, worthy of as high a place in the too ungrateful memory of men as the heroes of ancient Greece, we see all the vices of modern civilization usurp the place of the spirit of faith and of self-denial, here exterminating the savage races, and elsewhere succumbing to the enervating influence of the corrupting civilization of the East, instead of regenerating it or taking its place. It is impossible not to recognise that England, more particularly since the period when she gloriously ransomed her participation in the kidnapping of the negroes and colonial slavery, may pride herself on having escaped from the greater part of those lamentable deviations from the path of rectitude. To the historian who requires an account from her of the result of her maritime and colonial enterprises for the last two centuries, she has a right to reply, '*Si quæris monumentum, circumspice.*' Can history exhibit many spectacles of a grander or more extraordinary nature, or more calculated to honour modern civilization, than that afforded us by a company of English merchants which has endured through two centuries and a half, and which governed but yesterday, at a distance of two thousand leagues from the mother country, nearly two hundred million of men by means of eight hundred civil servants, and of an army numbering from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand men? But England has done better still; she has not only founded colonies, but called nations into being. She has created the United States; she has erected them into one of the greatest powers of the present and of the future, by endowing them with those provincial and individual liberties which enabled them to victoriously emancipate themselves from the light yoke of the mother country.' 'Our free institutions' (such is the tenor of the message for the year 1852 of the President of that great Republic) 'are not the fruit of the revolution; they had been previously in existence; they had their roots in the free charters under the provisions of which the English colonies had grown up.' But what are we to think if those orthodox nations, with the advantages of such apostles and of such teaching, have depopulated half the globe? And what society did Spanish conquest substitute for the races which had been exterminated instead of having been civilized? Must we not turn away our eyes in sadness at seeing how far the first elements

of order, energy, discipline, and legality are wanting everywhere, except, perhaps, in Chili, to Spanish enterprise, so destitute is it of the strong virtues of the ancient Castilian society, without having been able to acquire any of the qualities which characterize modern progress? In Hindostan itself what remains of Portuguese conquest? What is there to show for the numberless conversions achieved by St. Francis Xavier? What remains of the vast organization of that Church which was placed under the protection of the Crown of Portugal? Go ask that question at Goa; fathom there the depths of the moral and material decrepitude into which has fallen a rule immortalized by Albuquerque, by John de Castro, and by so many others worthy to be reckoned among the most valiant Christians who have ever existed. You will there see to what the moral influence of absolute power can bring Catholic colonies as well as their mother countries."

It is true that under the maladministration of some of the governors of Surat and Bombay, and especially under that of Sir John Child, corruption of manners, oppression, tyranny and fraud, were rampant among the officials, but notwithstanding that such evils reached to a great head, the general sense of the English community rebelled against misgovernment, and rose superior to it, whereas the corruption and despicable baseness of the Portuguese received no check, and were all but universal among them until their power and influence sunk to what they are now.

It is painful, however, to find that the most laborious student of this period, a devoted clergyman of Bombay, bears this unfavourable testimony of his countrymen in Western India in the earlier part of the seventeenth century:—"As the number of adventurers increased, the reputation of the English was not improved. Too many committed deeds of violence and dishonesty. We can show that even the commanders of vessels belonging to the company did not hesitate to perpetrate robberies on the high seas or on shore when they stood in no fear of retaliation. During a visit which some English ships paid to Dabhol the officers suddenly started up from a conference with the native chiefs, and attacked the town, having first secured some large guns in such a manner that they could not be turned against them. Their attempt failed, but after retreating to their ships they succeeded in making prizes of two native boats. Della Valle declares that it was customary for the English to commit such outrages. And although this last account may be suspected as dictated by the prejudices of an Italian, we can see no reason to question



Sir Thomas Herbert's veracity. Sailing along the coast with several vessels under the command of an English admiral, he descried, when off Mangalore, a heavily laden craft after which a Malabar pirate was skulking. The native merchant in his fright sought refuge with the admiral, but, writes our author with confessed grief, his condition was little better than it would have been if he had fallen into the pirate's hands. After a short consultation, his ship was adjudged a prize by the English officers. 'For my part,' proceeds Herbert, 'I could not reach the offence: but this I could, that she had a cargo of cotton, opium, onions, and probably somewhat under the cotton of most value, which was her crime it seems. But how the prize was distributed concerns not me to inquire; I was a passenger, but no merchant, nor informer.' The whole account would be incredible if not given on such good authority; but as it is, we must regard it as a blot upon the English character, and some justification of the Mogul officers when they afterwards brought charges of piracy against the company's servants. Sixty of the native seamen, concluding from the churlish conduct of the English that mischief was intended, and that they would be sold as slaves to the people of Java, trusted rather to the mercy of the waves than of such Englishmen, and threw themselves into the sea, 'which seemed sport to some there,' writes Herbert, 'but not so to me, who had compassion!' Some were picked up by canoes from the shore, and some by English boats; but the latter were so enraged with the treatment they had received, that they again endeavoured to drown themselves. A terrible storm which followed was regarded by the narrator as a token of God's severe displeasure."

After all, these were exceptional cases, such acts were perpetrated by pirates. The company, in every possible way, discountenanced the like; and at that juncture certainly commended justice and benevolence on the part of their officials, naval and mercantile.\*

The following anecdote shows strikingly that while the English were "heady" and hot, they were not unrelenting, even when labouring under the impression that a great wrong was inflicted upon them, and when its perpetrator was in their power. "When one of Van den Broeck's seamen had killed an English gunner, the enraged countrymen of the latter insisted upon having the Dutchman executed at once. In vain did Broeck beg that the forms of justice might be employed. Nothing would do but immediate execution,

\* Letters from the directors to the presidency.

until the crafty Dutchman devised a plan which showed that he relied upon English generosity. He declared that the sailor had been condemned to be drowned. No sooner had the factors heard this than their thirst for blood was allayed. Believing that there was really an intention of putting the man to death, they relented, interceded for his life, and he was pardoned."\*

The English were much inferior to the Dutch in economy, management, and knowledge of commercial philosophy; they had also less religious zeal; their morality was not better, and scarcely so good; but in one respect they were much superior to the Hollanders—they abhorred unnecessary bloodshed. It is difficult to reconcile the many good qualities of the Dutch with their avarice, their passion for making personal slaves of the natives, and readiness to shed blood. In all these respects the English favourably contrasted with them, but more especially in the last two, and most especially in the last of these particulars. The passion for gain evinced by some Englishmen was as censurable as that which marked the Hollanders, but, notwithstanding, the less sanguinary character of the latter as compared with the Portuguese, the English presented a strong contrast to their Batavian antagonists, where the sanctity of human life was concerned.

The Dutch, like other members of the Germanic family of nations, were much less refined in manners and feelings than those ethnological divisions of the human family comprising the Celts and Latins. The Hollanders and English were both deficient in gentler manners and sympathy, but the Dutch were much the ruder, justifying the satire of the poet Dryden—

"With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do:  
They've both ill nature, and ill manners too.  
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation,  
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion.  
And their new Commonwealth hath set them free,  
Only from honour and civility."

It must be admitted that Dryden bore an impassioned prejudice against the Dutch, and unscrupulously expressed himself generally where he had a prejudice; still, the stinging satire of those lines has a keen justice, which no one acquainted with the character of the Dutch in the seventeenth century can fail to see.

Taking the evidences collected in Kay's *Administration of the East India Company*, the first administrators of the company's factories on continental India were men of intelligence, integrity, and virtue. Indeed, whatever may have been the general supe-

† Van den Broeck's *Voyages*.



riority of the Dutch as men of business, the early settlers at Surat were their equals, and, as men of truth and honour, were superior to the Indian representatives of the states-general. Thomas Kerridge, the first president of the factory at Surat, was probably one of the most upright and intelligent men ever sent out by the company, and some who followed him immediately were but little his inferiours. The bravery of the English seems to have had more to do with their success than any other quality.\* The Rev. Mr. Anderson, writing of the increasing number of the English expeditions† as the seventeenth century advanced, observes:—"The object of all was purely commercial, but it was an ominous fact that Englishmen only obtained respect and influence among the natives by hard fighting."‡

While the English were merciful compared with the Portuguese, and even with the Dutch, it is to be regretted that several of the national vices were very prominent in Anglo-Indian society, and none more so than drunkenness. Almost all the early records, where such references would be at all in place, bear witness to this, as does almost every writer who notices the moral and social condition of the English at "the factories." Sir Thomas Roe,§ Della Valle,|| the Rev. Mr. Terry, already referred to in this work, bore frequent and sorrowful testimony to the same unhappy characteristic of his countrymen.¶ He declares that the natives at Surat were accustomed to say "Christian religion—devil religion." "Christian much drunk." "Christian much do wrong." "Christian much beat." "Christian very much abuse." These and similar expressions revealed the want of confidence of the natives towards Europeans. It is certain that the conduct of the Portuguese, and of the Dutch although in a lesser degree than the Portuguese, elicited this estimate of the professors of Christianity on the part of the natives; but the rude, coarse, and violent behaviour of the English also drew forth these censures. The disposition to cheat the natives in trade, which was so flagrant in the Portuguese and Dutch, was possessed by the English also, to a sufficient degree to prevent reliance upon them by the native dealers, to impair their moral influence, and to leave a stain upon their name.

The English were undoubtedly quarrelsome;

their drunken brawls at Surat, and afterwards at Bombay, were a scandal to the European name and to Christianity. "Drunkenness, and other exorbitanees which proceeded from it, were so great in that place (Surat), that it was wonderful they (the English residents) were suffered to live."\* "The manners of the young men in the factory (of Surat) were extremely dissolute, and on that account they were continually involved in trouble with the natives."†

There is, however, much to be said on behalf of the English as to their rough and contemptuous conduct towards the Indians. The latter seldom neglected an opportunity of robbing and assassinating their European visitors, when no provocation could have been pleaded in extenuation. It was impossible for any European to travel into the interior without being attacked, unless guarded by a powerful escort; and it was difficult even then to calculate upon safety, as the escort was frequently either in league with robbers and Thugs, or was composed of men ready to perpetrate the crimes against which, on the part of others, they were employed as a guard. These circumstances excited in a bold and ready-handed people like the English a warm and vigorous resentment, which the least provocation fanned. This was the true cause of many acts on the part of the English which call for modern censure. The following description of the conduct of the natives generally towards Europeans was given, after a diligent search through the pages of many early travellers, and of the letters of various officers of the English factories, by the author of *The English in Western India*:—"Canning, when on his journey to Agra, was assaulted and wounded by robbers. Starkey was poisoned. The caravan which Withington accompanied was attacked in the night at the third halting-place, and the next day they met a Mogul officer returning with the heads of two hundred and fifty coolies who had been plunderers. In Rajpootana the caravan was attacked twice in one day. Between that and Tatta the son of a Rajpoot chief professed to escort them with fifty troopers, but designedly led them out of their way into a thick wood. He there seized all the men, camels, and goods, and strangled the two Hindoo merchants to whom the caravan belonged, with their five servants. Withington and his servants having been kept for twenty days in close confinement, were dismissed, to find their way home as they best could. After this, when Edwards was travelling to Agra, the escort which he

\* Scrafton's *Reflections on the Government of Hindostan*. London, 1673.

† Thornton's *History of the British Empire in India*.

‡ *Treaties and Alliance*. London, 1717.

§ Roe's *Journal*.

|| *The Travels of Signor Pietro Della Valle*.

¶ Terry's *Voyage*.

\* *Journal of Sir Thomas Roe*.

† Rev. Mr. Anderson.



took from Baroch was found to be in league with fifty mounted freebooters, who hovered about them at night, and were only deterred from attacking them by seeing their bold attitude. When Aldworth and his party were returning from Ahmedabad, their escort was increased by the orders of government, because robberies and murders had been committed two nights before close to the city. Between Baroda and Baroch they were attacked in a narrow lane, thick set on either side with hedges, by three hundred Rajpoots, who, with their lances and arrows, wounded many of them, and succeeded in rifling two of their heavily laden carts.\* Gautier Schouten, a servant of the Dutch Company, who was at Surat in 1660, confirms all these accounts, and declares that when the English and Dutch went to Agra, they always joined themselves to native caravans. Even then they had frequently to defend themselves from Rajpoots, who descended from their mountains to plunder travellers. One anecdote affords us some idea of the local government at Ahmedabad. When Mandelslo was there, he was invited, together with the English and Dutch factors, by the governor, to a native entertainment. As is usual on such occasions, dancing-girls exhibited their performances. One troop having become fatigued, another was sent for. The latter, however, having been ill-requited on a former occasion, refused to attend. What measures then did the governor adopt? A very summary one indeed. He had them dragged into his presence, and then, after taunting them for their scruples, ordered them to be beheaded. These reluctant ministers of a despot's pleasure pleaded for mercy with heart-rending cries and shrieks. Their appeal was vain, and eight wretched women were actually executed before the company. The English factors were horrorstruck; but the governor merely laughed, and asked why they were troubled. This account, given by an eyewitness, whose veracity has been ordinarily admitted, is in itself a commentary upon the records of native rule."† Salbank, the pious factor of Surat, says in one of his letters home:—"The roads swarm with robbers, who would cut any man's throat for a third part of the value of a penny sterling. Howbeit, I, for my part, passed through all those hellish weapons, which those cannibal villains used to kill men withal, surely enough, through the tender mercies of my gracious God." It is not to be a matter of surprise that such men as the English should be easily excited

to deeds of force and violence among a people so cruel, treacherous, and rapacious.

It is admitted that the forms of religion were less attended to by the English in the early part of the century than by any of their rivals in India. The Portuguese, while lost in the excess of every vice, still not only observed their religious rites, but fanatically struggled to force them upon others. The Dutch, with a profound worldliness, were regular observers of the primitive forms of their worship, and zealously endeavoured to convert and educate the natives. Even when pursuing gain with greedy avidity, and in the midst of rude and stern conflict, they listened with respect to the rebukes of their ministers, and never withheld from them the means of erecting churches, establishing schools, preaching the gospel, and acquiring the native tongues. The English were alike parsimonious and extravagant. In general matters they became more and more spendthrift in the affairs of the factories, while the factors were paid stinted stipends, and while at home the English nation supported costly ecclesiastical establishments, and the company handsomely remunerated clergymen to preach to the crews of their outward-bound ships, in India they had no missionary spirit, and even infringed the terms of their charter, by neglecting to support adequately and in sufficient number chaplains for their ships and stations. Several devoted Christian ministers were in the service of the company during the seventeenth century, but rarely did they receive any encouragement from the directors of committees at home or from the principals of the factories in India.

Early in the history of the company's settlements, one Henry Lord showed much zeal for the welfare of the natives, in which he was countenanced and assisted by Kerridge, the president of Surat, already referred to. Indeed, the studious and pious undertakings of Lord seem to have been chiefly directed by Kerridge. Both these worthies felt a profound interest in the literature and religious state of the Parsees; and Lord instituted earnest inquiries into the Zend language, and into the sacred books of that strange people. The Banyans were the objects also of their benevolent and spiritual purposes. Lord has left us his first impressions of this peculiar class in the following quaint way, which is the more interesting, from being pervaded so entirely by the style of thought and language then prevailing:—"According to the busie observance of travellers, inquiring what noveltie the place might produce, a people presented themselves to mine eyes, cloathed in linnen garments, somewhat low descending,

\* Orme's *Fragments*.

† *Les Voyages du Sieur Albert de Mandelslo*.



of a gesture and garbe, as I may say, maidenly and well-nigh effeminate; of a countenance shy and somewhat estranged, yet smiling out a glosed and bashful familiarity, whose use in the companies affaires occasioned their presence there. Truth to say, mine eyes, unacquainted with such objects, took up their wonder and gazed, and this admiration, the badge of a fresh traveller, bred in me the importunity of a questioner. I asked what manner of people those were, so strangely notable, and notably strange. Reply was made, They were Banians.\*

The Rev. Mr. Terry, chaplain to Sir Thomas Roc, and afterwards rector of Great Greenford, left several works behind him—such as *A Memoir of Tom Coryate*, *Sermons preached before the East India Company*, and *Original Poems*. These all prove him to have been a very learned and pious man, and very desirous for the moral and spiritual welfare of the company's servants and the heathen. Copeland and a few other clergymen about the same time were zealous and devoted, and their names appear in the records of the company, and in various fragmentary works, with tokens of reverence.

It is remarkable that in several instances clergymen who became useful took their tone of piety and earnestness of labour from eminently pious laymen. Some of these laymen exercised by their letters and statements considerable influence upon the company at home, so as to induce them to more particularity in selecting clergymen for their ships who were adapted to usefulness among seamen, and at the same time learned men, who would be likely to study with success the languages of the East, the mental character of its populations, and the genius of its religions, and who would be likely to meet successfully in argument learned Brahmins. Amongst the benevolent laymen thus exercising a beneficial influence was one Joseph Salbank, who, in 1617, wrote an earnest letter to the directors of committees, entreating that clergymen of the character just described might be sent to the East.

It would appear that for a long time the presidents seldom paid visits of state and ceremony, whether to natives or Europeans, unattended by their chaplains. Pedro della Valle, the Roman, commonly called *Il Pellegrino*, was at Surat in 1623. He stated that on his arrival at that place he was visited immediately by the president, accompanied by two ministers, "as the English call their priests." Della Valle gave of these and other English gentlemen whom he met there a most flattering—or at all events most favourable—

account. Of the president he wrote that "M. Rastel spake Italian fluently, and was very polite, showing himself in all things a person sufficiently accomplished, and of generous deportment, according as his gentle and graceful aspect bespoke him." Rastel, although a courteous, hospitable, benevolent man, and a favourer of chaplains and religious persons, was not himself pious, as appears from the odd accounts given by Della Valle of his entertainments at the presidency. The oldest despatch from the company's officers at present extant is from the pen of this President Rastel. It is dated the 26th of July, 1630, on board the ship *James*, in St. Augustin's Bay, Madagascar.\*

Mr. Strecynshan Master, who succeeded the pious and painstaking Aungier at the western presidency, was a man of great excellence. Of him Bruce says:—"Strecynshan Master was afterwards chief at Madras, and in 1680 laid there the first stone of the first English church in India, carried on the work at his own charge, and never halted till he had brought it to a conclusion. He was dismissed the service by the court's order in 1681; but his offence is not stated. He was then knighted, and elected a director of the new company, which derived great benefit from his experience."†

The habits, manners, and customs of the English in India during the period of which we now treat, throw much light upon their national character, and reveal at once the influence of India upon them, and the sort of influence they exercised upon native communities and governments. Mr. Anderson, relying for his account chiefly on Roe, Fryer, and Della Valle, gives an amusing description of the manner of life of the British, not only in relation to the natives, but in their intercourse with other European nations. "Books and records give us but few glances of early English manners at this period (the first half of the seventeenth century). We may represent the factory as a mercantile house of agency, in which the president or chief was head partner. He and his junior partners, who were called factors, lived under the same roof, each having his own private apartments; but all assembling for meals at a public table, maintained by the company. They were also expected to meet for an hour every day for prayers. Such carriages and capital as they possessed were part of the common stock. Horses were expensive luxuries, used only by the chief and some of his friends. Bullock carts were in ordinary use. For space and furniture, the English and Dutch houses ex-

\* *Outward Letter-Book of the Surat Factory.*

† *Bruce's Annals.*

\* *Lord's Discovery of Two Foreign Sects.*



celled all others in the city. The president affected some style. When he went into the streets he was followed by a long train of persons, including some natives armed with bows, arrows, swords, and shields. A banner or streamer was borne, and a saddle horse led before him. His retainers were numerous, and as each only received three rupees *per mensem* for wages, the whole was but little. There were also many slaves whose clothing was white calico, their food rice with a little fish." The author of a *History of the Factories of Surat and Bombay, and the subordinate Factories on the Western Coast*, quotes an obscure book, written by the Rev. Mr. Ovington at the close of the seventeenth century, who thus describes the combination of extravagance and meanness at that time undoubtedly characteristic of the English nation, and which during the century was evinced at Surat by the factors:—"All Europeans dined at the public table, where they took their places according to seniority. The dinner service was sumptuous—all the dishes, plates, and drinking cups being of massive and pure silver—and the provisions were of the best quality. Arak and wine from Shiraz were ordinarily drunk at table. There were an English, a Portuguese, and an Indian cook, so that every palate might be suited. Before and after meals a peon attended with a silver basin and ewer, which he offered to each person at table that he might pour water over his hands. On Sundays and a few other days high festival was kept. The choicest of European and Persian wines were then introduced. On these festivals the factors often accompanied the president, at his invitation, to a garden which was kept for recreation and amusement. At such times they formed a procession. The president and his lady were borne in palanquins. Before him were carried two large banners, and gaily caparisoned horses of Arabian or Persian breed were led, their saddles being of richly embroidered velvet; their head-stalls, reins, and cruppers mounted with solid and wrought silver. The council followed in coaches drawn by oxen, and the other factors in country carts or on horses kept at the company's expense. There was a singular combination of pride and meanness displayed in the factors' mode of life. None of them—not even the chaplain—moved out the walls of the city without being attended by four or five peons. At the Hindoo feast of the Divali, Banyas always offered presents to the president, members of council, chaplain, surgeon, and others. To the young factors these gifts were of great importance, as by selling them again, they were enabled to procure their annual supply

of new clothes. This was beggarly enough, but not so low as another practice which was in favour with these young gentlemen, as they were now styled in courtesy. They had a clever way of enjoying practical jokes, and at the same time indulging their mercenary propensities. One of them would enter the premises of a Banya, and pretend that he was shooting doves or sparrows. The horrified believer in metempsychosis would then come out, earnestly implore him to desist, and even offer him 'ready money.' He 'drops in his hand a rupee or two to be gone,' says the narrator. There, reader, is a picture of the representatives of a high-minded nation drawn by one of themselves. Poor civilians! At least in your case necessity was the mother of invention."

The following passages from Mr. Anderson's description of the love of pomp shown by the chief factors at Surat, and the motives for the display, are characteristic:—"That an impression might be made upon the natives, the president indulged to a considerable extent in pomp and state—even more than the Dutch president. He had a standard-bearer and bodyguard composed of a sergeant and double file of English soldiers. Forty natives also attended him. At dinner each course was ushered in by the sound of trumpets, and his ears were regaled by a band of music. Whenever he left his private rooms he was preceded by attendants with silver wands. On great occasions, when he issued from the factory, he appeared on horseback, or in a palanquin, or a coach drawn by milk-white oxen—doubtless of that large and beautiful breed for which Gujerat is celebrated. Led horses with silver bridles, and an umbrella of state was carried before him. The equipages of the other merchants came behind in the procession, and corresponded in appearance with the president's." The writer of the above adds, "the pomp and splendour of the presidents were in advance of the times, and the directors strove to check them." A writer and traveller, often quoted by those who notice the early annals of the English in India, thus describes the equipages of the presidents, and of other persons of high position:—"Two large milk-white oxen are put in to draw it, with circling horns as black as a coal, each point tipped with brass, from whence come brass chains across to the head-stall, which is all of scarlet, and a scarlet collar to each, of brass bells, about their necks, their flapping ears snipped with art, and from their nostrils bridles covered with scarlet. The chariot itself is not swinging like ours, but fastened to the main axles by neat arches, which support a four-square seat, which is



inlaid with ivory, or enriched as they please; at every corner are turned pillars, which make (by twisted silk or cotton cords) the sides, and support the roof, covered with English scarlet cloth, and lined with silk, with party-coloured borders; in these they spread carpets, and lay bolsters to ride cross-legged, sometimes three or four in one. It is borne on two wheels only, such little ones as on four wheels are, and pinned on with a wooden arch, which serves to mount them. The charioteer rides before, a-straddle on the beam that makes the yoke for the oxen, which is covered with scarlet, and finely carved underneath. He carries a goad instead of a whip. In winter (when they rarely stir) they have a *mumjuma*, or wax-cloth to throw over it. Those for journeying are something stronger than those for the merchants to ride about the city, or to take the air on; which with their nimble oxen they will, when they meet in the fields, run races on, and contend for the garland as much as for an Olympick prize; which is a diversion, *to see a cow gallop*, as we say in scorn; but these not only pluck up their heels apace, but are taught to amble, they often riding on them.”\*

“The English had not yet properly adapted their mode of dress to the climate. The costume of the seventeenth century must have been found peculiarly cumbersome and oppressive in a tropical climate. Old prints represent Europeans in India with large hose, long waisted, ‘peasecod-bellied’ doublets, and short cloaks or mantles with standing collars. Then there were ruffs, which Stubbs says were ‘of twelve, yea sixteen lengths a piece, set three or four times double;’ and he adds that the ladies had a ‘liquid matter, which they call starch, wherein the devil hath learned them to wash and dive their ruffs, which being dry will then stand stiff and inflexible about their necks.’ Breeches, too, were worn by gentlemen preposterously large, and their conical-crowned hats were of velvet, taffata, or sarcenet, ornamented with great bunches of feathers. Probably, however, this dress approved itself to native taste better than ours. At least Fryer, when at Junar, flattered himself that Nizam Beg, the governor of the fort, admired both the splendour and novelty of his costume. Sir Thomas Roe and his suite, as we are informed, were all clothed in English dresses, only made as light and cool as possible. His attendants wore liveries of ‘red taffata cloaks, guarded with green taffata,’ and the chaplain always appeared in a long black cassock. Society was of the free and jovial kind. There were

\* Fryer.

no English ladies, and if the factors wished to enjoy the conversation of the gentler sex, they must resort to the Dutch factory. We have an account of a wedding party there. The bride was an Armenian; the bridegroom a Dutchman. All the Europeans of the place were invited, and every lady came; so there were present one Portuguese and one Dutch matron, a young Maronite girl, and a native woman who was engaged to marry a Dutchman. The circumstances under which the Portuguese lady was brought there are so characteristic of the times, that they should be narrated. The King of Portugal was in the habit of giving a dowry every year to a few poor but well-born orphan girls, whom he sent to assist in colonizing the settlements of India. A ship which was conveying three of these maidens had been intercepted and seized by the Dutch, who immediately carried their prizes to Surat. A supply of ladies was naturally received with avidity in that time of dearth, and the most eminent of the merchants became candidates for their hands. Two were taken, we know not where; but Donna Lucia, the third, married a rich Dutchman, and was a guest at the wedding banquet. She seems to have been contented with her lot. The affection of her Protestant husband led him to tolerate her religion in private, although she was compelled to observe in public the forms of the reformed church.”\*

The tombs of a people show their manner of life to after ages as faithfully as other indications more frequently referred to by the antiquary and the historian. In Western India there are many monumental tombs, which are very expressive of the habits of the English in the seventeenth century. One of the most recent modern historians of Bombay and Surat thus writes of the tombs of the latter place:—“Fancy may see in these sepulchral ruins the continuance of an undying rivalry between the agents of England and Holland. Van Reede, the old Dutch chief, has a brave charnel-house. His mouldering bones lie beneath a double cupola of great dimensions, formerly adorned with frescoes, escutcheons, and elegant wood-work. Its original cost may be supposed to have been enormous, when we read that to repair it cost the Dutch company six thousand rupees. It is not, indeed, to be compared with the Mohammedan tombs of Delhi, Agra, and Bejapore, but no European structures of the kind, except the tomb of Hadrian at Rome, and a few others, equal it. Doubtless the intention of its builders was to eclipse the noble mausoleum which covers the remains of Sir George and Christopher Oxenden, who died a few

\* Anderson.



years earlier than Van Reede. Christopher is commemorated by a cupola within the loftier and more expansive cupola raised in honour of his more distinguished brother, the president. The height of this monument is forty feet, the diameter twenty-five. Massive pillars support the cupolas, and round their interiors are galleries, reached by a flight of many steps. The body of an Indian viceroy might have found here a worthy resting-place; it is far too superb for the chief of a factory, and his brother, who was only a subordinate." The two Oxendens here referred to were men of eminent religious worth, maintaining unsullied purity amidst prevailing corruption, and a lifeful piety when a heartless formalism characterized the religious professions of the majority.

The tombs of the English in Western India do not generally convey impressions favourable to the taste, piety, and affection of those who erected them. A very able contributor to the *Bombay Quarterly* observes:—"A large number of inscriptions on our tombs are mere recitals of name, age, and date of death. Where regular epitaphs are composed by Anglo-Indians, their chief character is insipidity." So little care has been taken, however, of the sepulchres of those who laid the foundations of English power in India, that the monumental inscriptions are generally effaced. The writer first quoted remarks:—"No burial-grounds in India are comparable for the interest with which they are regarded by Europeans as those of Surat and Ahmedabad—particularly of Surat. They are histories. Had they been carefully preserved, instead of being barbarously neglected, during the last century, they would have thrown light upon an obscure period. As it is, their dilapidated monuments are as a few pages of a palimpsest, from which, after much painstaking and divining, a fragmentary narrative may be gleaned. Their magnificence, their escutcheons and other heraldic insignia, their religious symbols and passages of Scripture, traces only of which can now be observed, prove that the inmates of European factories affected a pomp and splendour even beyond those of their successors, and made more pretensions, at least, to religious sentiments than are generally attributed to them." "As at Surat, there are also at Ahmedabad both Dutch and English cemeteries. The tombs in the former, all of dates between the years 1641 and 1679, are built, not of stone, but brick and chunam, the inscriptions being admirably executed in the latter; and on some the Maltese Cross, or what is called the Cross of Calvary, is traced. One epitaph is in Latin, the rest are Dutch, and none are of

especial interest. All the epitaphs are remarkable for what they *do not*, rather than for what they do relate. The Dutch merchants did not often find time to express any religious sentiment, or to bewail the departed. The English ground is chiefly occupied with what may be called mess-room monuments—chilling memorials, without Christian symbols or religious allusions, unadorned by any manifestations of reverence, hope, or reflection upon the future." Such is the evidence indirectly given from the places of the dead of the habits and character of the English and their chief competitors during the eventful century the general character of which, as it regards the British in India, this chapter reviews.

The reason why there were ladies in the Dutch and not in the English factory was, that the government of Holland encouraged the matrimonial desires of the company's servants. There was a blot upon the morals of Bombay in connection with the introduction of females to the community. One of the company's own chaplains, a man of probity and piety, following the testimony of Dr. Fryer and others, describes the condition of several "cargoes" of Englishwomen sent out by the company, and barbarously deceived by them. Having described the immorality of the factors and their servants, he says:—"Nor, we are sorry to add, were these vicious propensities indulged only by men. A great many females on the island were far from exhibiting the gentler virtues which usually adorn their sex, but in this instance the company themselves were chiefly to be blamed. As Rome in her young days sat desolate until cheered by the ravished Sabines; as the poor slaves of St. Helena would not take kindly to their toil until the company brought a cargo of sable maidens to brighten their dreary hours; so also it was thought that the exiled soldiers of England must have a similar solace in Bombay. Gerald Aungier first suggested that they ought to be encouraged and assisted in contracting marriages with their countrywomen. Consistently with his character, he took a religious view of the question, and pointed out that the men, being Protestants, were in the habit of marrying native Portuguese women, the consequence of which was that their offspring were, 'through their father's neglect, brought up in the Roman Catholic principles, to the great dishonour and weakening of the Protestant religion and interest.' He therefore recommended that a supply of women should be sent out from England. This proposal was acceded to by the court of directors, and apparently improved upon, for they not only induced such



persons as were adapted to be wives of private soldiers to come, but 'gentlewomen and other women.' Unhappily, 'the gentlewomen,' as they still continued to be styled, had not learned, before they left England, to behave themselves; therefore their countrymen at Bombay were not very forward in offering them their hearts and hands. Some, however, married; but a judicious observer, who visited the island soon after, was shocked to see how sickly their children were, in consequence of the free-and-easy way in which the mothers lived, and their inveterate habit of taking strong liquors. But what was to become of those who remained single and unnoticed? Of course they supposed that the company were their honourable guardians, and that if they could not find husbands, they would at least have the protection of government. Not so the company. To the first party, indeed, a guarantee was given that they should be supported for the first year, and if, at the expiration of that time, they were still unmarried, they should be allowed their diet for another year. This engagement was faithfully kept. But then came out a second party, fondly expecting that they would be treated like their predecessors; indeed, they affirmed 'that so much was declared to them at the East India-house, by Mr. Lewis.' Nevertheless, their claims were not recognised. After considerable agitation on their part, and reluctance on the president's part, six or eight pagodas a month were allowed to *such as were actually in distress*; the more obvious objects of charity. The poor creatures had clearly been deluded, and almost left to starve. What was the result? They must have been tempted, if not actually driven, to sell their charms to the first bidder. The small stock of virtue which they had brought with them was of course soon expended. Then,—and not until then,—when they had been led into temptation, the voice of authority and erring-mocking piety assumed a threatening tone." The author of the foregoing remarks, with much ground for the accusation, declares that Governor Aungier, whose general excellence he commends, had "much Protestant zeal, but little Christian love." It is easy to imagine that the company encouraged these unfortunate emigrants to believe that they should receive support, when it was not intended to perform what they were led to suppose would be done for them, when we remember how frequently individuals embarking in undertakings, believing that they did so assured of government support, have found themselves deceived. The treatment of medical civilians during the Russian war, and of other classes, is too well known

not to be readily called up to remembrance by the reader in exemplification of this. Government and public bodies in England are too much in the habit of putting forth vaguely expressed offers and inducements to persons or bodies of persons whose services it is desirable to engage, and then taking shelter behind the vagueness and indefiniteness of the phraseology employed, although obviously tending to mislead, if it meant anything short of what the deceived and injured parties supposed it to mean.

It appears that the use of tea, at first a luxury among the English in India as well as at home, had become familiar among them at Surat before its value became known to the company in London. It is probable that the factors at the capital of the English settlements in Western India were accustomed to sip the fragrant and exhilarating beverage for a longer time than is generally supposed before the directors or the royal family in England knew anything of "the cup which cheers but not inebriates." Tea was certainly a commodity of trade between China and Surat for a considerable time before it was an article of import in Britain. The Dutch, who generally anticipated the English in the discovery of useful articles of commerce, perceived the value of this article both in India and in Holland a number of years before the English court quaffed the strange but even then esteemed, delicious, and enlivening beverage. Although the Dutch medical practitioners generally, as afterwards the English, offered opposition, champions were found in Holland among the members of the faculty from the first, who advocated it as advantageous. Tulpius, a celebrated physician of Amsterdam, acquired still higher reputation by a treatise on the virtues of "*Thee*," in the year 1641. The following extracts are taken from official records now in the India Office. At that time (1664) "some good *thea*," as it was then spelt, was deemed an acceptable present for his majesty, King Charles II.

1664, *July 1st*.—Ordered, that the master attendant do go on board the ships now arrived, and enquire what rarities of birds, beasts, or other curiosities, there are on board, fit to present to his majesty, and to desire that they may not be disposed of till the company are supplied with such as they may wish, on paying for the same.

*August 22nd*.—The governor acquainting the court that the factors have in every instance failed the company of such things as they writ for, to have presented his majesty with, and that his majesty may not find himself wholly neglected by the company, he was of opinion, if the court think fit, that a silver ease of oil of cinnamon, which is to be had of Mr. Thomas Winter for seventy-five pounds, and some good *thea*, be provided for that end, which he hopes may be acceptable. The court approved very well thereof. —



After the first half of the seventeenth century had passed away, the social rank of the English in India became much elevated. Persons of superior station in England were sent out to India, and the company at home comprised noblemen and members of parliament. The traders were no longer so anxious as formerly "to sort their trade with men only of their own qualitie;" they became eager for the connection of "gentlemen," a class of whose association with them they had been so much afraid, lest the traders of England should in consequence withdraw their confidence. The increased salaries of the chief persons in the factories induced "gentlemen" to use their influence to obtain these offices; and the style of *social* humility which had characterized the factors became much modified by the infusion of a new class among them. It does not appear that the sagacity, morality, or religious zeal of the factors and agents was improved by these accessions of gentility, but the social bearing of the English was in some respects elevated. One of the influences which acted most unfavourably upon the social, and even religious condition of the English in India, during the latter portion of the first half of the seventeenth century, and throughout the second half, was the presence and conduct of "interlopers." This class perpetrated no inconsiderable portion of the crimes committed by the English, and by which the native governments were so often enraged, overlooking the provocation which their subjects offered to all foreigners. The factories were kept in a state of incessant apprehension by these intruders, and a spirit on the part of one class of Englishmen towards another, of a resentful and vindictive kind was fostered, which sunk the moral character of the nation in the esteem of other nations, native and European, disturbed social intercourse among the English themselves, and impeded their religious efforts. It also rendered the customs and manners of the English less intelligible to the native governments, as well as peoples; for they could not comprehend how men of the same nation professing loyalty to the same throne, could be so opposed in policy. Mr. Mill, logically right as to the superior facilities which free-trade would have given for the exchange of the products of India and England, overlooks, as Professor Wilson reminds his readers, the impossibility of private adventurers providing force to encounter the armed competition of the other European companies, and the oppressions of the natives. The learned professor, however, replies to Mr. Mill in a tone more peremptory than argumentative. The following remarks on the subject, by the Rev. Philip Anderson, place

the matter ethically and logically, as well as circumstantially, in its true light:—"Yet it must be admitted, that when once a monopoly was legally established, an invasion of its privileges became an insult upon the majesty of law. The agents of the company in India, therefore, were fully justified in resenting the intrusions of 'interlopers.' Their masters had entrusted to them the defence of a monopoly, which, however objectionable to those who had no share in its advantages, was a species of property which had been obtained with all the forms of law and justice. Moreover, their establishment was maintained at a great expense, and they often disbursed large sums of money to procure and retain the favour of a corrupt court in England, and a still corrupter court in India. The factors were, as it were, keepers of a manor, for which the tenants, their masters, paid a high rent, and which they farmed at a heavy cost. Interlopers, then, were to them as poachers, who must be warned off, and if they persisted in their depredations, strenuously attacked with fire and sword, or prosecuted in courts of law as enemies not only of the East India Company, but also of the British nation."

Another of the circumstances which militated against the moral and religious life of the company's officers was the permission given to them to trade on their own account, as well as in the interest of the company. Notice has been taken in previous chapters of the detriment to the trade of the company which thus arose, and of the resolution taken by the directors of the company to put it down. It appears that an oath was exacted from the servants and chiefs in the factories not to trade on their own account. This was supposed by the majority of the directors to be the only security against the practice. Some of the factory agents were, however, men who objected to take an oath on any ground or for any reason. They offered to make a declaration under liability to any penalty which might be incurred by perjury. This was thought reasonable by a large party among the proprietors at home, but not by the majority, and the oath was insisted upon. This gave rise to "great heats" among the proprietors and directors in London, the opposition of the non-jurors as they may be called, having led to considerable commotion in the mercantile world. The Rev. Philip Anderson says, referring to the dishonesty which led to so much turmoil—"These scandalous proceedings led the court to require from them all an oath that they would not engage in private trade, and this in spite of their Anabaptist members, who pressed hard for the substitution of a mere declaration." This is



scarcely a candid way of putting the facts of the case, nor is the tone of the reverend writer liberal and just. He makes the statement upon the authority of Bruce's *Annals*, Anderson's *Colonial Church* and Evelyn's *Diary*. Bruce merely refers to the dry and naked fact of an opposition having been made; Anderson's *Colonial Church*, is hardly an apposite authority in the case; the entry in Evelyn's *Diary* is as follows:—"1657, Nov. 26. I went to London to a court of ye East India Company on its new union, in Merchant-taylors' Hall, where was much disorder by reason of the Anabaptists, who would have the adventurers oblig'd onely by an engagement, without swearing, that they might still pursue their private trade; but it was carried against them." The word Anabaptist was at that time a term of reproach used against any sect of religionists whose views were not well understood, and appeared eccentric or peculiar, 'especially if they resisted episcopal authority, supervision, and state in ecclesiastical affairs; but the name was more especially applied to Baptists, who, of course, were not Anabaptists in their views of the ordinances of baptism: nor did their general opinions, religious or political, bear any resemblance

to those of the Anabaptists of Munster, whose wild and violent proceedings brought so much odium upon the name. Evelyn did not understand these distinctions, nor care to understand them; but Mr. Anderson, as a learned modern divine, must have been aware of them, and is censurable for copying an error which he knew to be one, so far as the class who opposed the oath-test, and their motives, were concerned. They were no doubt conscientious persons, who took views of an oath similar to those which Quakers and Moravians now hold, and which, however others may believe to be erroneous, as does the writer of this history, yet society tolerantly respects the scruples of those who make a conscience of the matter.

Although the jurors and non-jurors in the factories were of one mind as to the undesirableness of taking any pledge against private trading, the form of the test and the acquiescence of those who had no religious scruples about it, led to social differences which left fresh impressions of the unaccountable manners of the English among the Portuguese, Banyans, Parsees, and other natives, who, although brought into less intimate contact with the British, were observant of their ways.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (*Continued*).

NOTWITHSTANDING the many drawbacks to the social and religious life of the English, there grew up gradually much outward respect to religion in the usages of the factors. Every morning at six, and every evening at eight o'clock, prayers were read or offered every Sunday; in addition to these services was one other, after which a sermon was delivered. The author of *The Early History of the Factories at Surat and Bombay* thus writes on this subject:—"Few as are the records still extant of this period, all who read them at the present time must be struck by their religious tone; they prove that it was an age of religious profession, if not of moral practice. Puritanism was dominant, or at least had not given way to that open profligacy, that ridicule of sacred things, and contempt of religion, which disgraced the reign of Charles II. In India religious men did not blush to own their fear of God, and it suited the purposes of irreligious men to imitate them. Official correspondence even was devout. Thus when Rastel had arrived

in St. Augustine's Bay on his passage to Surat, he commenced his homeward despatch with these words:—"It hath pleased Almighty God in his great goodness to protect us hither in safety, and in blessed union and concord together, the 14th day of this present month; our people generally then in reasonable good plight, and without the loss of any more than five men in our whole fleet, for the which His mercies may His Blessed Name be magnified for ever.' And he concludes by declaring, that he humbly commends his masters in his prayers, entreating God to bless them, and direct their counsels and affairs. When announcing the death of a subordinate in 1630 the chief of the factory writes thus:—"The death of Mr. Duke was very unwelcome unto us, as being sensible of the want you will find by the missing of so able an assistant in that place where he hath been long acquainted. God of His mercy so direct our hearts, who must follow him, that we may be always ready for the like sudden summons.' The same style is observable in all official letters, and



the usual formula with which they conclude is, 'Commending you to the Almighty's protection,' or 'Commending you to God's merciful guidance.' Yet these pious adventurers had notions of their own about the observance of the Lord's Day. Although they were scrupulous in attending divine service, in the disposal of the rest of their time they preferred the *Book of Sports* to the *Lesser Catechism*. After sermon on Sundays they used to repair to the suburbs, where they amused themselves in a garden by shooting at the butt; and—which was still less to be defended—they indulged to some extent in gambling. Their visitor, who has told us these little facts, was so skilful in shooting that he contrived to win a hundred mamoudis or five pistoles almost every week. Each inmate of the factory had his allotted hours for work and recreation. On Fridays, after prayers, the president and a few friends met for the purpose of friendly intercourse, and of drinking the health of their wives left in England."

The respect paid at that time to clergymen, and to the externals of religion, both in England and in the colonies, is fairly depicted in this passage relating to the manners of the English at Surat and Bombay. The writer very justly takes Lord Macaulay, the brilliant historian of England, to task for the light in which he placed the habits of Englishmen in this respect. The years during which the above description of the factors at Bombay and Surat applies, include the period to which Lord Macaulay refers, when he describes with such exaggerations the degradation of the clergy. He writes:—" 'The clergy were regarded as, on the whole, a plebeian class. And, indeed, for one who made the figure of a gentleman, ten were mere menial servants.' And again:—'A young Levite might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year,' for which he was expected to live as a servant. These statements are taken from a satire of Oldham's, and given as grave history. Yet, at the same time, a German traveller noticed the great respect shown at Surat to the clergy, and it is a fact, that when Oxenden, Aungier, Streynsham Master—all men of good families—were there, the chaplain received higher pay than all the senior factors, and took precedence after the members of council. Is there any reason to suppose that the East India Company delighted more than others to honour the clergy?"

During the reigns of the second Charles and the first James there were many of the higher gentry in England who made small account of clergymen, and in various instances there is proof of their depression being as

great as Lord Macaulay describes; but this contempt for men "in orders" did not descend to the middle and mercantile classes, from whom they received high and venerating respect. His lordship omits to make this distinction broadly, and hence life among the English in India seems so opposed to life in England, as the records of the one, and Lord Macaulay's statements of the other, would make appear.

Among the proofs given by some writers of the low condition, morally and religiously, of the English in India during the seventeenth century, is their neglect of treaty and other engagements with the natives and rival European nations. The terms on which the Portuguese commander of Bombay surrendered the island to the officers of Charles, have, it is alleged, never been kept by the British, and this is very frequently put forward as a strong point against their honour. The truth is the treaty or agreement thus made was never ratified by either of the courts concerned. The island was, as has been shown in a previous chapter, the property of the English monarch, in virtue of a marriage contract with the royal house of Portugal; and it was the duty of the Portuguese king, not only to see that it was absolutely ceded, but that compensation should be made for any delay in the cession created by the Portuguese officers on the spot. Indeed, the English did demand reparation from the Portuguese government for the damages sustained. The native princes frequently made agreements, suffered their subjects to violate them, and yet insisted upon the English performing their part in a covenant rendered no longer mutual by the previous violation on the one part. At a later period (during the eighteenth century) the English in India were exposed to similar imputations from their own countrymen at home, frequently with as little justice.

The conduct of the company in violating contracts with their own countrymen was often very bad, and especially so towards their soldiers. The rise of the English military power in the seventeenth century presents a strange example of how the day of small things may precede the day of great ones. In 1677 there was a militia corps, equal in number to a weak modern infantry battalion, at Bombay. Neither the Brahmins nor Banyans would serve, but commuted service by a money payment; the other natives offered no objection, as far as can be gathered from the documents now in existence: they were chiefly half-caste Portuguese. The regular troops were seldom of any great account as to numbers. The company's force, on taking



possession of Bombay Island, consisted of ninety-three English, and a hundred and eighty-seven French and Portuguese deserters and half-castes. This has been called the company's first European regiment, but there was a proportion of natives among them. This corps was gradually strengthened, especially by German mercenaries. These were in great favour with the English, between whom and them a better agreement existed than between any other sections of this motley battalion. A desire to hire Rajpoots existed among the directors, which was but slowly responded to by their agents; for although that class of Indians were very warlike, they were proud and vindictive, and were generally esteemed treacherous if once their fidelity was shaken. In 1676 there were forty troopers miserably mounted. The English have always been noted for mounting their cavalry inefficiently, and even at this early period of their Indian empire they showed this peculiarity. It arose from a misguided parsimony, which was coexistent with extravagance in other particulars. It was difficult to keep up regular troops at Bombay; the island was so unhealthy at that time from its marshy surface that malaria swept away Europeans, especially European soldiers, very fast. The company's factors were instructed to study military tactics in case the defence of the settlement should oblige them to hold military commissions. The ideas which the directors at home entertained of military drill are curiously shown in some of their despatches. The following order is a specimen:—"We would have the inhabitants modelled into trained bands under English or other officers as there shall be cause, and make of them one or two regiments, or more, as your number will hold out, exercising them in arms one day in every two months, or as often as you shall think may be convenient, but you need not always waste powder at such exercise, but teach them to handle their arms, their facings, wheeling, marching, and counter marching, the first ranks to present, draw their triggers together at the beat of the drum, and fall into the rear for the second ranks to advance, as is often used with learners in our artillery ground, but sometimes they must be used to firing, lest in time of action they should start at the noise or the recoil of their arms."

There was much drilling in pursuance of this order, and the more the troops were exercised, the greater the proportion of them who perished with pestilence, especially by a particular form, which, as described by the physicians of that day, exactly corresponded with the disease called *cholera morbus* in this

age. Four-fifths of the troops sent from Europe to Bombay perished within a few years, many within a few months of their arrival, until about 1685, when the drainage of the low-lying lands near the sea was to some extent, effected.

Notwithstanding the intrepidity shown by the British in their naval contests with the Portuguese, and the individual daring of most of them when danger beset, there was no promise of future military eminence in the composition or character of the first troops raised in Bombay, or in the management of those recruits sent out from England. The officers frequently committed outrages upon the civilians of their own countrymen, and their insolence and abuse of respectable natives were disgraceful to their profession. Some of them were even convicted of acts of petty piracy and robbery in the harbour. The non-commissioned officers unfortunately followed the example so infamously set them. The opinion which the immortal Clive gave of the state of the troops in India, previous to his time and as for the most part he found them when he arrived in India, is amply borne out by official documentary evidence, and by the testimony of impartial travellers. "Formerly the company's troops consisted of the refuse of our jails, commanded by an officer seldom above the rank of lieutenant, and in one or two instances with that of major; without order, discipline, or military ardour."\*

The conduct of the company to its soldiers during the seventeenth century was unjust. In this respect the company only copied the royal governments of their country. To the great officers England has been generally munificent; but to the inferior officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers she has never been generous. No nation was ever so heroically served by her troops; no nation ever repaid military devotion more shabbily. Until the year 1858 the poor soldier was literally plundered by certain classes of his superiors, military and civilian. "The system" of the British army was so administered, that whether in camp or barrack, at home, or on foreign service, in tent or sleeping room, in mess or in clothing, the soldier was cheated and inhumanly neglected. Even the arms and working tools supplied to him were fraudulently manufactured, and he was compelled to make good the damage from fractures, &c., out of his miserable pay. The English soldier was subjected to a discipline which forbade him to complain to the public, and was then remorselessly robbed, and

\* MS. quoted by Bruce in his *Plans for the Government of British India*. Part ii. chap. i. sec. 4.



cruelly left to die in filthy or ill-ventilated barrack-rooms,\* or on foreign march, and on far-off encampments, from inadequate supplies. The reader acquainted with these facts can feel no astonishment if the troops in Bombay Island were robbed, oppressed, and neglected in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Such was the case. According to a letter from the deputy-governor and council of Bombay, written the 24th of January, 1676, or, as Orme alleges, 1677, to the court of directors, captains were compelled to serve for the pay of lieutenants, and each inferior rank to serve for the pay of the rank immediately beneath it. Certain surplus sums actually given to the troops at former times were exacted from them in the form of repayments by instalments; various other oppressions at last drove the troops into revolt. There was no failing in their loyalty, but they had been goaded to madness by wrongs, and by the insolent contempt which the mercantile servants of the company showed to them. On these circumstances, an eminent clergyman of Bombay, who had studied the records of the period, and who partook of no partialities for the military, thus wrote; and the annals of Bruce, and the narratives of Fryer and others, justify fully the judgment expressed:—"Could any government expect that their troops would return such ungenerous treatment with steadfast attachment and unshaken fidelity? In 1674 the court of directors received a most solemn warning that such would not be the case. The soldiers affirmed that the court had promised them a month's pay, with a free discharge, after they should have served three years; and when this was not accorded to them, they broke out into a mutiny, which was only subdued after concessions had been made. Three of the ringleaders were condemned to be shot, and on one—a Corporal Fake—the sentence was executed. The other two were pardoned by the president. Shaxton, the officer in command, was suspected of abetting the revolt, and was accused of remissness in checking his men's insubordination. Fryer, who was on the spot at the time, thought that a foolish rivalry divided the civil or mercantile and military branches of the service, and that Shaxton's real offence was similar to one which excited Romulus to commit fratricide, for that he had only mortified the factor's vanity by treating their engineering efforts with contempt, and ridiculing some palisades with which they had fortified Bombay. Whatever

the nature of his crime, he was obliged to give up his sword, and was placed in confinement. A court of judicature was then formed for his trial, in which a pompous attorney impeached him, and compared him to Cati-line. But the soldier defended himself with ability, and the court decided that they could do nothing but refer his case to the court of directors. He was therefore sent to England, where he died at the termination of his voyage."

The company was not warned by these events; but at a later period, by further mulcting the soldiery, and paying their native labourers part of their wages in rice, at a price fixed by the company's officer, at least ten per cent. above its market value, the troops and people were driven into revolt together. A narrative of the main features of that affair, which was led by Keigwin, has already been related in a previous chapter; it is only necessary to say here, in reviewing the events of the century, and the moral history of those transactions, that the inveterate depreciation of the military service by the mercantile community in England and in India was the true source of these evils. It is surprising to mark the courage and constancy of British soldiers under provocations of so much neglect and injustice. No other army could have maintained self-respect under so many indignities; nor could they have exhibited such greatness of soul as our poor soldiers have displayed, with so little example or encouragement from their civil masters,—

" 'Tis wonderful  
That an invisible instinct should frame them  
To loyalty unlearned, honour untaught,  
Civility not seen from others, valour  
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop  
As if it had been sowed."

Neither did the second revolt at Bombay teach the company—or at all events their civil officers—"justice to the soldier." Although (as has been shown in a previous chapter) Keigwin obeyed the mandate of the king, and delivered up the island, assured of immunity for himself and those who acted under him, the agreement was not entirely and faithfully kept by the government. It was probably not the intention of the directors to violate the terms of what may be called the capitulation, so extensively as they were violated, but they had from the first no intention of faithfully keeping it. The royal government countenanced no harsh treatment in the case. The violent and unprincipled president of Surat,—a man whom Dr. Cooke Taylor represents as having been as

\* The writer of this history, accompanied by a clergyman, saw the sleeping-room of a married soldier, quartered in an English provincial town, through which a drain ran!



"cowardly as he was cruel," Sir John Child,\* barbarously and perfidiously made the revolt a pretext for the gratification of his personal enmities, under pretence of jealousy for the honour of the company, although during the revolution the company was better served by the revolvers than it had been under the management of Sir John Child's deputies. One of the company's own chaplains, already quoted, thus comments upon these proceedings:—"Such was a revolt which happily began and ended without bloodshed—if we except a wound inflicted at table by Thorburn on Keigwin in a drunken quarrel. Alarming as it was, and dangerous to the existence of Anglo-Indian power, it forms an episode in our history of which we are not ashamed. Keigwin emerges from the troubled sea of rebellion with a reputation for courage, honour, and administrative capacity. His crime of treason was in a measure atoned for by his moderation and shining qualities, and found some palliation in the provocation which he received, and which the president—as we infer from his subsequent conduct—must have aggravated. On the other hand, the clemency of the crown and company is worthy of all admiration, and leads us to ask, Where is the nation that can, like the English, vindicate the authority of its government, bring down the haughty front of successful rebellion, and at the same time not suffer justice to inflict a single pang on mercy?" The reverend writer seems carried away by his love of country to contradict by anticipation his own testimony, notwithstanding his general accuracy, for he immediately afterwards admits, on the ground of documents seen by himself, that the company privately countenanced the persecution of the pardoned revolvers. He also gives this picture of the horrible and heartrending barbarity and cruelty of Sir John Child:—"It is true that accounts differ as to the manner in which the terms of surrender were observed; but if it should be shown that they were infringed, an imputation could not be cast upon the English government, nor, save indirectly, upon the company, but only upon their president. Writers who were favourable to the company simply state that they acted in good faith; their opponents accuse their servants of treachery, but with such obvious malice, that we suspect their veracity. Fletcher, who had

joined the rebels, but whose conduct was, in other respects, unblemished, retained the command of his company. But Thorburn is said to have fallen a victim to Sir John Child's malignity, and there is every reason to believe that he was treated with singular harshness. It is possible that he was justly committed to prison, in consequence of his inability to satisfy the demands of his creditors; but when there, we are told, not a slave was permitted to attend upon him, nor his own wife to visit him. Hard treatment brought on a fever, and his life was in danger. The jailer conveyed this mournful intelligence to his wife, who hastened, together with her two small children, to the general's presence, and entreated that her husband might be provided with a medical attendant. The boon was denied, but she was permitted to share his sufferings. She soothed his pain one day and part of a night, after which he breathed his last. Shuddering humanity turns with distrust from the remainder of the narrative, and therefore we abridge it. On returning home she found the doors of her own house closed against her, and was obliged to take up her abode with her slaves and children in a small outhouse. Her relatives ventured to give her succour only at night, and by stealth. The widow of Thorburn was a proscribed outcast, till her beauty and sufferings attracted the love and compassion of an officer who commanded an East Indiaman, and imagined that he was independent of Sir John Child. He wedded her, and also her misfortunes. At the general's request he was deprived of his appointment. Grief soon put an end to his troubles and his life. The lady was again left a widow, with a thousand pounds of East India stock for the support of herself and family."

What the conduct of the company really was may be determined by their own despatches. In one of these letters they thus direct the president:—"As for Watson, that scandalous chaplain of Bombay, let him have no salary from us, from the time of his rebellion, nor any other officers there, as near as you can, without incurring a new hazard, until you are firmly settled in your government. And let Mr. Watson know he is no more our servant: banish him the island; and let him take care to pay for his own passage home, and provide yourselves another chaplain for Bombay out of some of our ships, if you can meet with any so much to your satisfaction as you have at Surat in the room of Mr. Badham, deceased."\* The crime of Mr. Watson was that of ministering to the

\* It is surprising that so just an historical critic as Miss Martineau should overlook the real character of the Brothers Child in her admiration of their ability. Even as to talent, Sir Josiah was the head, and Sir John the hand, very much to the injury of the company, for he was rash, desperate, and vindictive, without directness, steadfastness, or bravery.

\* *Letters from the Court to the President and Council, 1684-85.*



revolutionary army and people, which he might in any case, as a clergyman, have felt bound to do; how much more when the revolvers acted in the name of the king?

There is reason to believe that the prejudice against the soldiery,—the officers more particularly,—and persecution of them, and of all who took their side in these disputes, although finding ready acquiescence with the directors as a body, were chiefly the work of Sir Josiah Child, who ruled the company at home by his personal address, simulation of ingenuousness, strong common sense, and extensive acquaintance with trade. Bishop Burnet thus notices him:—"This summer Sir Josiah Child died; he was a man of great notions as to merchandise, which was his education, and in which he succeeded beyond any man of his time; he applied himself chiefly to the East India trade, which by his management was raised so high, that it drew much envy and jealousy both upon himself and upon the company; he had a compass of knowledge and apprehension beyond any merchant I ever knew; he was vain and covetous, and thought too cunning, though to me he seemed always sincere."\*

There is a curious and yet painful exemplification of the morals of the directors at home in their repeated attempts to open up a slave-trade with Western India. The following is a just summary of the letters from the court to the president and council of Surat during July, 1683, and February, 1684, as they were quoted in the appendix of Colquhoun's treatise:—"Slaves were amongst the exports of the English factory at this time. The Island of St. Helena had been bestowed by the crown upon the company, and they wanted labourers for their plantations. So they desired their president at Surat to send them cargoes of negroes, with as little concern as if they had been any other kind of live or dead stock, and mentioned twenty pounds per head as the purchase-money. At first only males were exported, and these desolate beings remained at St. Helena without any of those domestic enjoyments by which even the life of a slave may be solaced. However, there is a point at which oppression defeats its own projects. Like many other animals when deprived of their mates, the slaves became troublesome. So wives were demanded for them. The honourable company do not, indeed, hint that their commercial minds were susceptible of pity, but their interests were in this case promoted by showing kindness to their human cattle. 'It may be convenient,' they wrote, 'you should send near as many female slaves as male to St. Helena, because

the male will not live so contented, except they have wives.'"

A letter from the court to the president and council at Surat was written in May, 1683, which contained a postscript, probably the most singular which has come down to our times in connection either with the East India Company or the courts of England:—

His majesty hath required of us to send to India to provide for him there one male and two female blacks, but they must be dwarfs of the least size that you can procure, the male to be about seventeen years of age, and the females about fourteen. We would have you, next to their littleness, to chuse such as may have the best features, and to send them home upon any of our ships, giving the commander great charge to take care of their accommodation, and in particular of the females, that they be in no way abused in the voyage by any of the seamen; for their provision and clothes you must take care to lay it in, and let them be set out with such ear and nose-rings, and shackles for ornaments about their legs (of false stones, and brass, but not with gold), as is usual to wear in the country, but let them not be used by them in the voyage, but sent to us apart.

Upon this extraordinary *postscriptum* in a despatch, the author of *The Early History of the Factory at Surat, of Bombay, and the Subordinate Factories on the Western Coast*, makes the following comment:—"Whether three unhappy creatures of precisely such ages, sizes, and features as were required, or whether, indeed, any were ever procured and forwarded, we are not informed. The court seemed as if they did not feel they were seeking to traffic in human beings. They write not of men and women, boys and girls, but only use the words male and female, as they might in reference to any strange animals. The reason why this order was sent is obvious. It was in the year 1683, when the company was seriously alarmed lest their exclusive privileges should be lost. A rival company were strenuously endeavouring to obtain a royal charter, and it was said that the people favoured their attempt. Even the king and council had taken the matter into consideration. The old company, therefore, strained every nerve to conciliate the monarch, and were anxious to indulge all the caprices of the royal and effete debauchee. They not only listened to his puerile request for toys with souls in them, but also would have them ornamented in such a manner as they supposed would satisfy the most fastidious taste."

British interests in India have, as already shown, been signally indebted to physicians, a class who at home have, to the present day, shown much disinterestedness and benevolence in the practice of their profession towards those whose necessities required their generosity. They have been equally distinguished for their public spirit and patriotism, in the navy, the army, and the cities of the

\* *History of his own Times*, book vi.



empire, in the shipwreck, the battle, and the regions of pestilence and death. It is only when they are in competition with one another that they appear to disadvantage. In Scotland and Ireland medical men have always held a higher social place than in England; this fact, however difficult to account for, is indisputable. Fryer, a physician, already quoted as a traveller and author, passed through many strange adventures in India; and the authentic accounts of him reveal the manners of men of his profession in the English factories and settlements in the seventeenth century, and also disclose their peculiar relations to the communities in which they dwelt, and the natives beyond their own immediate sphere with whom, professionally, they were frequently brought in contact. Fryer's services as a physician began in India in 1673. He frequently attended the wealthier Portuguese and Dutch, and was called to great distances into the interior to visit rich Brahmins, Mohammedans, and even princes, when native skill failed to afford them succour. Fryer was an eminent scholar as well as a skilful *medicus*; his enterprise was energetic and courageous, his aptitude for dealing with the natives keen and prompt, and his observation of men and things clear and comprehensive. On one occasion he was sent for to Junar by the Mogul commander-in-chief, and the narrative given of his adventures there and by the way is amusing, and very instructive as to the manners of the time and country, both native and European. The following abstract of his adventures has been given by a late vice-president of the Bombay branch of the Asiatic Society:—"On reaching his destination, Fryer attended the durbar, respectfully presented a letter from the English president, and met with a courteous reception; but after being told who his patients were, was desired to wait for the occurrence of a fortunate day. At length, being summoned to the harem, he found a bed hung with silk curtains, and was desired to place his hand under the curtains, in order that he might feel an invalid's pulse. At first his conductors played him a trick, and let him touch the wrist of a healthy slave; but when he declared that the owner was in robust health, there was extended to him an arm which gave signs of a weak constitution, and left him no doubt as to what should be his prescription. The following day the khan sent for him to bleed another of his wives. Across the apartment into which he was ushered a large curtain extended, through a hole of which an arm was stretched. As good luck would have it, there was behind this screen a number of inquisitive ladies,

who, as they peeped through, so pressed upon it, that suddenly it gave way, and revealed the whole bevy fluttering like so many birds over which a net has been spread. None endeavoured to escape, but there they stood, pretending to be excessively modest, and peering at the doctor through the open lattices of their fingers. As for him, he found himself holding by the arm 'a plump russet dame,' who summoned the blood to her cheeks, and commanded that the curtain should be replaced. No offence was given or taken. The doctor was rewarded with a golden shower of pagodas poured into the basin over which his patient had been bled, and his servants, to his infinite satisfaction, drew them out of the extravasated gore. As he was returning, the bearers of his palanquin must have tried to enjoy a joke at his expense. But it was in the end no joke for them. Drawing near a small grove, they saw such a blaze of light created by fireflies, that they really were, or pretended to be, terrified. The learned doctor, not being milder and gentler than the rest of his countrymen, drew his sword, and, as he said, by opening a vein or two, let out the *shaitan* who had crept into their fancies. Yet the perpetrator of such a wanton and tyrannical act could listen with the most tender compassion to tales of misery which the natives told, and which probably were at that time as harrowing themes as the people of any country have ever dilated on." It is stated by the same authority:—"Fryer had the company's interests in view as well as his own. He did his utmost to open a trade between Junar and Bombay, suggesting that the Mogul general might in this way provide his army from Bussora and Mocha, in exchange for which he could give the ordinary merchandise of his country. However, the Mahratta army, possessing the intervening districts, were an obstruction in this route which probably was not overcome."

Bombay, the events of which occupy so much space in the history of this century, was not as enticing to our countrymen when they took possession of it, or for long after, as it at last became. Lord Macaulay furnishes some amusing notices in his *History of England* of the little interest taken by the English of that age in beautiful or bold scenery, although it is certain his lordship's picture of the period in that particular is exaggerated. The first British settlers at Bombay, and their successors for some time, could see nothing in the beauty of the situation to compensate its insalubrity and other local disadvantages. Certainly the condition of the island itself gave no promise of its ever assuming the aspect which it now wears. Anderson thus



depicts its state and appearance at the time when the English were quietly settled down in it:—"Indeed, the place must have looked desolate enough. Large tracts of land, which have since been recovered from the sea, were then overflowed. At high tides the waves flowed to the part called Umerkhadi, and covered the present Bhandi Bazaar. Near where the temple of Mumbadevi stands, a place still called *Paydhuni*, or *feet-washing*, marks where a small stream of salt water was formerly left by the receding tide, and where persons might wash their feet before entering Bombay. Where Kamatapore is now there was then sufficient depth of water for the passage of boats. In fact, during one part of every day only a group of islets was to be seen. According to Fryer, forty thousand acres of good land were thus submerged. The rest of the island seemed for the most part a barren rock, not being extensively wooded, as at present, but producing only some cocoa palms, which covered the esplanade. The principal town was Mahim. On Dongari Hill, adjoining the harbour, there was a small collection of fishermen's huts, and a few houses were seen interspersed among palm-trees, where the fort now stands. On various spots were built towers with small pieces of ordnance, as a protection against Malabar pirates, who had become peculiarly insolent, plundering villages, and either murdering the inhabitants, or carrying them into slavery. The English also found, but soon removed, a government house, which was slightly fortified, defended by four brass guns, and surrounded by one of the most delightful gardens. Portuguese society was depraved and corrupt. The population did not exceed ten thousand."

This writer expresses his astonishment that the English did not recognise the advantages of the place, as the most important in India, both to their power and commerce. It appears, however, that the company did recognise its importance, by their persistent occupation of it, even through many misfortunes, and their removal thither of the presidency of Surat. They could hardly have foreseen its progress in the eighteenth century, and its ultimate greatness. The importance of a position in the transactions of commerce or war is relative: there then existed no such relative importance in the position itself to the native powers, or the rival European settlements, as afforded to either the English or other foreigners any ground of anticipating its subsequent greatness and relations. Events afterwards marked out Calcutta as a more suitable seat for English dominion in the East. The decay of the Mogul Empire, the conquest

of the Mahrattas, the vast designs and bold attempts of the French, the various internal changes and revolutions in the peninsula, all contributed to give to Bombay the relative importance it finally attained; but these were events beyond the foresight of the most sagacious merchants or statesmen, and the British were too practical to indulge in vaticinations. All the importance was attached to Bombay that it deserved in the circumstances of that age, as soon as the English were long enough there to test its value, and its commercial and political relation to India generally.

When, towards the close of the seventeenth century, Bombay was improved by drainage, increase of population, enlarged commerce, and respectable public buildings, it was worthy of being the great centre and chief settlement of the English communities in India. The neighbourhood at that time differed very much in appearance from its aspect of a century earlier or a century later, and still more from that which it presents nowadays. The following description of a portion of the vicinity carefully deduced from the authorities, English and foreign, which afford any information upon the subject, is probably as correct as it is striking:—"At the other side of the small strait which separates Salsette from Bombay were the Acquada Blockhouse, and on the hill a mile beyond Bandora the Portuguese Church, which so gracefully overlooks the sea. The Roman Catholic services were well performed. A new landing-place led to a College of Paulitines, as the Jesuits were then called. Before the college stood a large cross, and before that was a space, which when the traveller from whose work this account is chiefly taken, visited it, was 'thwack'd full of young blacks singing vespers.' The collegiate establishment was defended, like a fortress, with seven cannon, besides small arms. Great hospitality prevailed, and distinguished guests were, on their arrival and departure, saluted with a roar of artillery. The Superior possessed such extensive influence that his mandates were respectfully attended to in the surrounding country, and the traveller who had the good fortune to be provided with his letters commendatory, was met by the people, wherever he halted, with presents of fruit and wine. The town of Bandora was large, with tiled houses. A view from mid-channel, embracing the town, college, and Church of St. Andrew, was extremely picturesque. At a distance of four miles was another church, described as magnificent; and the whole neighbourhood was studded with the villas of Portuguese gentlemen, many of whom lived in considerable state. To the east of Salsette, the sail



by way of Thana to Bassein, which is now so justly admired, must in those days have been of unrivalled beauty. Trombay was adorned with a neat church and country seat. When Thana had been passed, the traveller's eye rested at every half mile on elegant mansions. Two of these deserve special mention. One, the property of John de Melos, was three miles from Thana. It stood on a sloping eminence, decorated with terraced walks and gardens, and terminating at the water side with a banqueting house, which was approached by a flight of stone steps. A mile further was Grebondel, the property of Martin Alphonso, said to be 'the richest Don on this side Goa.' Above rose his fortified mansion, and a church of stately architecture. Within Bassein were six churches, four convents, a college of Jesuits, another of Franciscans, and a library of historical, moral, and expository works. The *Hidalgos'* dwellings, with their balconies and lofty windows, presented an imposing appearance. Christians only were permitted to sleep within the walls of the town, and native tradesmen were compelled to leave at nightfall."

The termination of the seventeenth century in Western India disclosed a condition of social existence in the English factories truly horrible. The older the settlement, the worse the settlers. There is scarcely any vice for which Surat and Bombay had not obtained a terrible notoriety. The number of English ladies who had during the last quarter of the seventeenth century arrived in India, with the hope of marrying rich factors or merchants, were generally successful in their speculations, but their behaviour as wives neither brought honour to themselves nor happiness to their husbands. In all classes, high and low, the grossest immorality prevailed among both males and females, and writers of those times, such as Ovington and Alexander Hamilton, describe both Surat and Bombay as perfect hells:—"As regards the military at this period, the company had not been taught by bitter experience to treat them with liberality, and consequently they found that they themselves were treated by them with little respect. Their vexatious regulations infused a spirit of insubordination into the minds of all the troops, from the highest officer to the private soldier. Captain Carr, indeed, did not hesitate to insult the deputy governor in his council chamber. Unsummoned, he appeared before his honour to demand an inquiry into his conduct. He was told that he had not been sent for; but, as he had come of his own accord, he would perhaps be so good as to explain why he had not appeared on parade for two mornings. 'I

had business,' was his laconic answer. The deputy governor mildly suggested that his business could not have been very urgent, and that it really appeared as if the captain was not anxious to perform his duty. Upon that Carr began to swear 'good mouth-filling oaths' at his honour, and when threatened with punishment by him, shook his fist in the deputy's face. The affair was terminated by the captain being placed under arrest, and confined to his own quarters. Such an example thus set by an officer was, as might be expected, imitated by private soldiers, and at last all fell into such a disorganized state that the governor could not find a man whom he would venture to make a serjeant or corporal."\*

While the state of morals among military and civilians was the lowest, there were many faithful admonitions from the chaplains, who were more successful in resisting the tyranny of the chief factors than the military were. While the company's ships were playing the part of pirates, their chief representatives acting as oppressors, the agents cheating the company and the natives, and sometimes cheated by both in turn, and while all were eager for plunder, by sea or land, the following well-expressed prayer was offered daily in the factories, it having been sent out by the directors for that purpose†:—

O Almighty and most merciful God, who art the sovereign Protector of all that trust in Thee, and the Author of all spiritual and temporal blessings, we Thy unworthy creatures do most humbly implore Thy goodness for a plentiful effusion of Thy grace upon our employers, Thy servants, the Right Honourable East India Company of England. Prosper them in all their public undertakings, and make them famous and successful in all their governments, colonies, and commerce both by sea and land; so that they may prove a public blessing by the increase of honour, wealth, and power, to our native country, as well as to themselves. Continue their favours towards us, and inspire their generals, presidents, agents, and councils in these remote parts of the world, and all others that are intrusted with any authority under them, with piety towards Thee our God, and with wisdom, fidelity, and circumspection in their several stations; that we may all discharge our respective duties faithfully, and live virtuously in due obedience to our superiors, and in love, peace, and charity one towards another, that these Indian nations among whom we dwell, seeing our sober and religious conversation, may be induced to have a just esteem for our most holy profession of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honour, praise, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The differences between the two companies, "the London Company" and "the English Company" having been introduced to India, especially by the embassy of Sir W. Norris, to the Mogul, in the interest of "the English" or "new company," embittered extremely the social state of the English living in India at the commencement of the eighteenth century

\* Bruce; Anderson.

† Rev. Mr. Ovington.



as it had during the last years of the seventeenth. Taking the whole of the seventeenth century, as it were, at a glance, the vicissitudes of the English were many, their fortunes fickle, their character contradictory, their defeats signal, their progress, nevertheless, indisputable, as their habits were bold and rude, and their spirit persevering and resolute. Wars from without and revolutions within impelled them forward, as the wind which beats against the ship fills its sails and assists its progress. They were also knit to the soil of India by the rude blasts of war. As the tree was shaken it made for its roots a freer soil every time it bent to the gusts which swept through its branches and threatened its destruction. The determination to hold on without flinching, so natural to the English character, was strengthened and trained by the rude discipline of the century, and gave a tone to the Anglo-Indian mind which it has never lost; but which, from war to war, conquest to conquest, and generation to generation, has come down to the present day, and has aided the English now in India to abide and subdue a military revolution and popular insurrection the most sudden, vast, sanguinary, and appalling recorded in the history of the world. The words of the reverend author of *Early Notices of the Factories of Western India*, written in review of this period, and its relation to events there, has eloquently expressed what will appropriately close this chapter:—"Such were the English at their first appearance on the Western coast of India. It must be confessed that the natives had before them a strange variety of models from which to form in their minds the character of an Englishman. Roe and Herbert, the acute diplomatist and the polished gentleman; Best, Downton, and other valiant mariners; the inquiring and literary Kerridge; hard headed, ungrammatical, and religious Joseph Salbank; wine-bibbing Rastell; Mil-denhall, cheat and assassin; preachers or gossellers, half Anglican and half Zuinglian; orthodox chaplains; a few scampish, reckless travellers; and piratical, merciless captains—such a medley could scarcely leave any well-defined impressions upon the native mind. Probably opinions were decided by circumstances. The jovial Jehanghire found that

an Englishman was a well-trained courtier and good boon companion; the Banyas of Surat found that he was a clever tradesman, and a hard driver of a bargain. But doubtless at first the popular feeling was one of fear, afterwards of contempt. Hindoos and Mussulmans considered the English a set of cow-eaters and fire drinkers, vile brutes, fiercer than the mastiffs which they brought with them, who would fight like Eblis, cheat their own fathers, and exchange with the same readiness a broadside of shot and thrusts of boarding-pikes, or a bale of goods and a bag of rupees. As time wore on, the estimation in which the English had been held, declined. After a few years there were but certain illiberal merchants, struggling that they might keep the market of Surat to themselves, and exclude by fair means or foul the Portuguese and Dutch. The celebrity which their naval skill and courage had gained for them soon passed away; the glory reflected on them from a royal embassy was soon forgotten. They were only known as shrewd and vulgar adventurers who had opened warehouses in India. Their existence was scarcely heeded by the Mogul despot, whose imperial sway was one of the most extended, and his throne one of the most splendid on the face of the earth. Yet that sway was destined to fall into their grasp; that throne to depend upon the forbearance and magnanimity of the successors of those peddling traders. These English were indeed regarded as men of an insignificant country, dissolute morals, and degraded religion; yet they were the pioneers of a people who now possess territory more than four times the size of France, and seven times that of Great Britain and Ireland. Let the British empire in the East, then, be compared to Gothic architecture, which began with its wooden buildings, thatched roofs, and rush-strewn floors, but was gradually refined into the groined roofs, elaborate mouldings, stately pillars, and delicate tracery of our magnificent cathedrals. Joseph Salbank and his contemporaries were of the ruder, not to say of the baser sort; but now the empire is a noble structure, the style and order of which remain to be further developed by ingenuity and labour; nor have they, we thank God, yet reached a period of debasement and decline."



## CHAPTER LV.

## THE HOME AFFAIRS OF THE COMPANY DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century, destined to be so full of great events in connection with the East India Company, found it struggling against prejudice and competition even in the place where it had its birth.\* The rival company was not wiser, happier, nor more prosperous. Both these bodies became anxious as to their future position. The "committee of seven" which had been proposed (as noticed in a former chapter) in the answer given by the company to the king, was now believed to be an important instrument for effecting some practical measure. By a resolution of the General Court, April 17th, 1701, the committee of seven was empowered to receive any proposals which the rival (the English) society might make for a union. The remainder of the year was consumed in negotiations which frequently appeared likely to prove fruitless, but at the beginning of 1702 terms were mutually agreed upon, as a general basis of adjustment, to be however deferred for more mature consideration. These terms were—"That the court of twenty-four managers or directors should be composed of twelve individuals chosen by each company; that of the annual exports, the amount of which should be fixed by the court of managers, a half should be furnished by each company; that the court of managers should have the entire direction of all matters relating to trade and settlements subsequently to this union; but that the factors of each company should manage separately the stocks which each had sent out previously to the date of that transaction; that seven years should be allowed to wind up the separate concerns of each company; and that, after that period, one great joint-stock should be formed by the final union of the funds of both. This agreement was confirmed by the general courts of both companies on the 27th April, 1702. An indenture tripartite, including the Queen and the two East India Companies, was the instrument adopted for giving legal efficacy to the transaction. For equalizing the shares of the two companies, the following scheme was devised. The London Company, it was agreed, should purchase at par as much of the capital of the English company, lent to government, as, added to the £315,000 which they had already subscribed, should render equal the portion of each. The dead stock

of the London Company was estimated at £330,000; that of the English company at £70,000; whereupon the latter paid £130,000 for equalizing the shares of this part of the common estate. On the 22nd July, 1702, the indenture passed under the great seal; and the two parties took the common name of 'The United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies.'\*\*

On this footing of co-operation rather than union, the two companies continued to intrigue and trade, to be jealous and to jar, until towards the close of 1707. At that juncture, the government resorted to one of its old oppressive measures towards the company. The statesmen and senators of that age, as well as the court, seemed to think that the chief advantage of fostering trade was the opportunity it ultimately provided for robbing the merchants. The government, in this instance, determined to exact a forced loan from both companies, indicating a spirit of impartial injustice. Fearing that any reluctance to advance the enormous sum of £1,200,000 demanded would cause the court to admit private adventurers into rivalry with both companies, these corporations made haste to settle their differences with one another, and meet the emergency as best they could. They agreed to refer matters to the lord high-treasurer of her majesty for final adjudication. On this foundation the act, 6 Anne, cap. 17, was passed; enacting that a sum of £1,200,000, without interest, should be advanced by the united companies to government, which being added to a former advance of £2,000,000 at eight per cent. interest, constituted a loan of £3,200,000, yielding interest at the rate of five per cent. upon the whole; that to raise this sum of £1,200,000, the company should be empowered to borrow to the extent of £1,500,000 on their common seal, or to call in monies to that extent from the proprietors; that this sum of £1,200,000 should be added to their capital stock; that instead of terminating on three years' notice after the 29th of September, 1711, their privileges should be continued till three years' notice after the 25th of March, 1726, and till repayment of their capital; that the stock of the separate adventures of the General Society, amounting to £7200, which had never been incorporated into the joint-stock of the English company, might be paid off,

\* *History and Management of the East India Company.* London, 1786.

\* Mill; Bruce.



on three years' notice after the 29th of September, 1711, and merged in the joint-stock of the united company; and that the award of the Earl of Godolphin, settling the terms of the union, should be binding and conclusive on both parties. The award of Godolphin was dated and published on the 29th of September, 1708. It referred solely to the winding up of the concerns of the two companies; and the blending of their separate properties into one stock, on terms equitable to both. As the assets or effects of the London Company in India fell short of the debts of that concern, they were required to pay by instalments to the united company the sum of £96,615 4s. 9d.: and as the effects of the English Company in India exceeded their debts, they were directed to receive from the united company the sum of £66,005 4s. 2d.; a due debt by Sir Edward Littleton in Bengal, of 80,437 rupees and 8 anas, remaining to be discharged by the English Company on their own account. On these terms, the whole of the property and debts of both companies abroad became the property and debts of the united company. With regard to the debts of both companies in Britain, it was in general ordained that they should all be discharged before the 1st of March, 1709; and as those of the London Company amounted to the sum of £399,795 9s. 1d., they were empowered to call upon their proprietors, by three several instalments, for the means of liquidation.\*

By indenture, *quinque partite*, dated 22nd July, 1702, made between various parties, the old company conveyed to the new (united) company all its forts, settlements and dead stock of whatever kind. "By deed poll enrolled in Chancery, dated 22nd March, 1709, the old company, in pursuance of Lord Godolphin's award, and for the entire extinguishment of their corporate capacity, having granted, surrendered, yielded, and given up to the Queen, her heirs and successors, their corporate capacity or body politic, of Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies, and all their charters, capacities, powers, and rights, for acting as or continuing to be a body politic or corporate, by virtue of any acts of parliament, letters patent, or charters whatever; the Queen by letters patent, dated the 7th May in the same year, accepted the surrender; and thus, the right of trading to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, together with the government of the forts and settlements possessed by the English in India, became vested in the 'United Company of

Merchants in England trading to the East Indies.' " \*

The year 1708 was an important era in the company's history, the union of the two companies seemed to promise the extinction of the interlopers, and to terminate all grounds of quarrel with the court and parliament. The united company being heavy creditors of the state, had a claim upon the royal protection and favour, and for a very considerable time, independent merchants, however energetic and enterprising, were of opinion that opposition and rivalry were hopeless. For a number of years the history of the company at home, although not barren of interest, was devoid of all exciting topics. In the meantime, even home events were gradually and quietly consolidating the company's power, and laying broad the foundation of that superstructure of greatness which it was destined to raise.† During the reign of Queen Anne several acts of parliament were passed which had an important bearing upon the interests of the company; one was named—"An Act for enabling and obliging the Bank of England, for the time therein mentioned, to exchange all Exchequer Bills for ready Money upon demand, and to disable any Person to be Governor, Deputy-governor, or Director of the Bank of England, and a Director of the East India Company, at the same time." Another was entitled—"An Act for making good Deficiencies, and satisfying the public Debts; and for erecting a Corporation, to carry on a Trade to the South Seas, and for the Encouragement of the Fishery; and for Liberty to trade in unwrought Iron with the Subjects of Spain; and to repeal the Acts for registering Seamen." This act defined the limits of the charter granted to the South Sea Company, and prohibited that company from infringing the rights of the East India Company.

The 10th Anne, cap. 28, is entitled, "An Act for continuing the Trade and Corporation capacity of the United East India Company, *although their Fund should be redeemed.*" According to cap. 17, 6 Anne, it was provided that the government might redeem its debt to the company, and terminate the company's privileges thereupon, under certain conditions stated. The 10th of Anne repealed that proviso, and substituted another to the purpose expressed above.

In the reign of George I. there were two acts in which the company was interested. The first (7 George I., cap. 5) was entitled, "An Act to enable the South Sea Company

\* *The Law relating to India and the East India Company*, p. 3.

† *History of the East India Company*. London, 1793.

\* Bruce vol. iii. 635—639; Mill, vol. i. cap. v. 103, 104.



to engraft part of their Capital Stock and Fund into the Stock and Fund of the Bank of England, and another part thereof into the Stock and Fund of the East India Company, &c." The greater part of this act refers to the South Sea Company. Section 32 relates to the borrowing of money on bond by the East India Company; part of section 33 relates to the same subject. The remainder is as follows:—"That it shall not be lawful for the said United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, or their successors, to discount any bills of exchange, or other bills or notes whatsoever, or to keep any bills or cash of or for any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, whatever, other than the proper monies and cash of the said united company." The other (7 George I., cap. 21) was called, "An Act for the further preventing His Majesty's Subjects from trading to the East Indies under Foreign Commissioners; and for encouraging and further securing the Lawful Trade thereto; and for further regulating the Pilots of Dover, Deal, and the Isle of Thanet." The following section remained in force till the abolition of the East India Company in 1858:—"The said united company shall be allowed to ship out stores, provisions, utensils of war, and necessities for maintaining their garrisons and settlements, free of all duties; so as such duties, if they had been to be paid, would not have exceeded, or do not exceed, in any one year, the sum of three hundred pounds."

Having noticed the influence of legislation upon the constitution of the company during a portion of the eighteenth century, it is important to our narrative to refer to the progress of the trade for some time after the union of the London and English companies in the General Association of English Merchants trading to the East Indies. As in the previous century, so during a considerable portion of this, the exports consisted in bullion, quicksilver, lead, and small portions of other metals; hardware in considerable variety, and a large assortment of woollen cloths.\* The official value of these exports for the year 1708 was only £60,915. The following year it rose to £168,357. But from this it descended gradually, till, in the year 1715, it amounted to no more than £36,997. It made a start, however, in the following year; and the medium exportation for the first twenty years subsequent to 1708 was £92,281 per annum. The average annual exportation of bullion during the same years was £442,350. The articles of which the import trade of the East India Company

chiefly consisted were calicoes and the other woven manufactures of India; raw silk, diamonds, tea, porcelain, pepper, drugs, and saltpetre. The official value of their imports in 1708 was £493,257; and their annual average importation for this and the nineteen following years was £758,042. At that period the official value assigned to goods at the Custom House differed not greatly from the real value; and the statements which have been made by the East India Company of the actual value of their exports and imports for some of those years, though not according with the Custom House accounts from year to year, probably from their being made up to different periods in the year, yet on a sum of several years pretty nearly coincide.\* In 1730 the value of the imports was £1,059,759; the exports of the same year were only of the value of £135,484. In fact, the exports did not increase from 1708 to 1730; the differences were of course paid in bullion. With regard to the rate of profit during this period, or the real advantage of the Indian trade, the company, for part of the year 1708, divided at the rate of five per cent. per annum to the proprietors upon £3,163,200 of capital; for the next year eight per cent.; for the two following years nine per cent.; and thence to the year 1716 ten per cent. per annum. In the year 1717 they paid dividends on a capital of £3,194,080, at the same rate of ten per cent. per annum, and so on till the year 1723. That year the dividend was reduced to eight per cent. per annum, at which rate it continued till the year 1732.†

Although the independent merchants of England were, as *Englishmen*, debarred from all trade with the East, they frequently embarked their capital in foreign companies, the history of which will be given in future chapters.‡ This especially took place at the formation of the Ostend Company. The English East India Company urged the government of Great Britain to pursue English subjects thither, and make their engaging in any trade with India under any flag whatever severely penal.

In the year 1730 matters of great moment to the company transpired. The independent merchants believed that a favourable juncture had arisen for again opposing the company's exclusive claims. The circumstance of a new sovereign having ascended the throne inspired—or at all events sustained—the hopes entertained of breaking up the monopoly in the

\* Mill; Whitworth.

† Mill.

‡ *The Case of the East India Company in 1707.* London, 1712.

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India.* London, 1812.



Eastern trade, and petitions were presented to parliament in that year.\* The debt which the government had incurred to the company was enormous, and the interest paid on it—five per cent.—was felt by the nation to be heavy. That debt, however, must be liquidated before the company could be abolished. There were yet three years before the charter would expire, under the clause of a three years' notice. The petitioners offered to raise the money due to the company by government, to pay it in five instalments within the three years, each instalment to bear four per cent. interest, until the whole was paid, when the entire subscription should only bear two per cent.† The proposers of the new scheme declared against all monopoly, alleging that the trade should be thrown open to private enterprise, the subscribers to the new fund having the control of all forts and factories, and receiving a duty of one per cent. on British imports in India, and of five per cent. on Indian imports in England. There was so much plausibility in this proposal, that many were taken with it, and a strong impression was made on the government and parliament. This company having no trade, could only make dividends to its subscribers from the interest paid by government and the duties to be levied in India and in England. The expense of the forts and factories, it was believed, would be defrayed by the territorial revenue connected with them. On the whole a dividend of six per cent. per annum was estimated as certain to be made to the subscribers.‡ The rate of interest on money was low in Europe during 1730—very low in England, and still lower in Holland. This circumstance made the merchants and capitalists of England very ready to subscribe. Many, however, conjectured that a far higher dividend than six per cent. per annum would be realized when the trade should be completely thrown open, as its increase to a vast extent was thought probable, from the large resources of the East, and the rapid development of British wealth and power. It was alleged that the duties would amount to a vast sum in a few years, and increase in a ratio promising wealth to the subscribers. The petitioners were connected with the cities of London and Bristol and the town of Liverpool, which in half a century had risen in population and importance with unexampled rapidity. Even Manchester did not afford so extraordinary an example of advancing commerce, for it had

for ages been a considerable town, numbering fifty thousand inhabitants in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, but Liverpool at the close of the seventeenth century was a very insignificant place. The petitioners from each of these cities solicited to be heard by counsel at the bar of both houses. As the press had now assumed some importance in England, its advocacy of "the merchants' petitions" added to the effect which these documents produced both in parliament and on the country, and a very great excitement sprang up. The East India Company, and the relations of East Indian commerce to the national welfare, were discussed everywhere—on 'Change, in the senate, in the cabinet, in London coffee-houses, and in the homes of the people in the provinces. The argument which appeared to weigh most with persons generally was, that one-third of the stock of the East India Company belonged to foreigners, and it was not just that British subjects should have been laid under restriction for the benefit of such. It was also contended with much plausibility that the company, by dilatory management, extravagance, and encumbering itself with politics, wasted most of its profits, which, although very great in virtue of its monopoly, only permitted a dividend of eight per cent. per annum, in consequence of such drawbacks. The company put forth vast power in its own defence; and in the press and the parliament it found ready and able advocates. The turning point of the controversy was, as usual, a question of pecuniary advantage to the government. The company offered to reduce the interest upon the debt to four per cent., and to make a donation of £200,000 to the public exchequer, if their monopoly was renewed. The parliament, influenced by the cabinet, could not resist so tempting a bait. The opponents of the company found no favour from the moment that accommodation was offered. The old privileges were further continued to Lady Day, 1776, with the usual proviso of three years' notice, and with the additional provision that, should their exclusive privileges then determine, they should, nevertheless, be permitted to trade as a body corporate.\* Matters, however, did not continue so long on that footing, as, in 1744, when the nation was engaged in a fierce war, the company opened negotiations with government, offering a million loan at three per cent., on condition of their monopoly being extended to 1780, and further by a three years' notice beyond that time. Their opponents were taken by surprise, the movement was so skilfully accom-

\* Hansard.<sup>1</sup>

† Anderson's *History of Commerce*.

‡ Anderson's *Commercial History of the British Empire*. London, 1764.

\* Company's statutes—3 George II., cap. 14; 17 George II., cap. 17; and 23 George II., cap. 22.



plished, and so secretly and suddenly undertaken.

From 1730 to 1744 the trade of the company was very steady. Their imports, according to the official value, approached a million sterling annually. Their exports increased to nearly half a million in value; but a large portion of these consisted in stores for the forts and factories. The imports were, in the main, paid for in bullion. Mr. Mill constantly presents this fact to his readers as a proof that the trade of the company was of little value. He did not fail to perceive that if there was a profit upon the imports, the trade was of value to the company; but he supposed it must be of little or no value to the nation, because bullion was exported for commodities received—a fallacy which had been exploded before the period when his history was written.

The year 1732 is notable as that in which the company began to make up annual accounts. In this year also the dividends were reduced from eight to seven per cent.; but in 1744 they were again raised to eight. The Dutch, during this century, were obliged gradually to lower their dividends from twenty-five per cent. to twelve, although for a time they rose again to fifteen. The English company was much embarrassed by the conflicts with France; and the operations in India of Dupleix and Labourdonnais tended to lower the company's credit, and to depress its hopes.\* The general impression among the directors, at the close of the first half of the eighteenth century, was desponding, and well it might be, in view of war in Europe and in India, the progress of the French there, and the disasters and humiliation of the British. Nevertheless, the trade maintained with India and the East was vast. Mill, relying upon Orme and the reports of the committee of secrecy, thus exhibits it in figures:—

Gold and Stores exported.	Bullion do.	Total.
1744 £231,318	£458,544	£689,862
1745 91,364	476,853	568,217
1746 265,818	560,020	825,838
1747 107,979	779,256	887,235
1748 127,224	706,890	834,114

The bills of exchange for which the company paid during those years were:—

1744 £103,349	1747 £441,651
1745 98,213	1748 178,419
1746 417,647	

The amount of sales for the same years (including thirty per cent. of duties, which remain to be deducted) was:

1744 £1,997,506	1747 £1,739,159
1745 2,480,966	1748 1,768,041
1746 1,602,388	

\* *History of the British Empire in India.*

The official value at the custom-house of the imports and exports of the company, during that period, was as follows:—

	Imports.	Exports.
1744	£743,508	£476,274
1745	973,705	293,113
1746	646,697	893,540
1747	128,733	345,526
1748	1,098,712	306,357

The dividend was eight per cent. per annum during the whole of the time. During the same period, the trade of the nation, notwithstanding the war, had considerably increased. The imports had risen from £6,362,971 official value, to £8,136,408; and the exports from £11,429,628 to £12,351,433; and, in the two following years, to £14,099,366 and £15,132,004.

The first half of the eighteenth century was comparatively one of quietness for the East India Company at home; though the possessors of its stock were frequently much alarmed by the threatened or actual reduction of dividends, the large loans which it was necessary to give the government, the contests prior to the union of the London and English companies, and the final arrangements which left it in the condition in which it existed at the close of the half century; yet, as compared with its anxieties and troubles in previous periods of equal extent, it was not unprosperous. A time, however, was now arriving pregnant with the mightiest issues. War between the English and French in India was already raging, and out of this turmoil it was destined, after much misfortune and shame, that the company should arise great and triumphant.

The events about to take place in India, and those which had already transpired there, were singularly influenced by men of remarkable character; and by incidents connected with them, which, independent of the control of the company, were ripening to effect its fortunes and its glory. Three men were born in Europe during this period, by whom the future of India was to be influenced more than by any other men who were destined to take part in its affairs during the continued existence of the East India Company. These three men were Dupleix, Clive, and Hastings. Dupleix was born at the beginning of the century, and had arrived in India and laid the foundation of a policy while yet Clive was a schoolboy, and Hastings was a child. Their ages were different, and their successive irruption, as it may be called, upon the soil of India marvellously combined to alter its whole relations politically, and its ultimate destinies in every way. Dupleix, a Frenchman, sought the



glory of his country, and devised a scheme by which he believed India would be subjected to France. His genius was lofty, and his adaptation to the task complete. Different in his intellectual constitution from Clive, he was fitted to originate what the latter could not. It may be doubted whether the peculiar genius of Clive would have had scope in India, had not Dupleix created a state of things peculiarly his own. Finding that condition of affairs in existence, Clive was, of all others, the man to enter upon the field already thus occupied, and to find in all around him the essential elements for promoting his own glory and the glory of his country. It was necessary for England not only to have her own Clive, but that such a man as the French Dupleix should precede him, and clear the path upon which he was to tread. Hastings was not adapted by nature to be the predecessor of Clive in the work which was providentially opened for the performance of the latter. As the contemporary, but more especially as the successor of Clive, Hastings could find his sphere, and in that sphere he was potential. There are few pages in history which more strikingly exemplify the prescient wisdom of Providence than that which discloses the consecutive relationship of these three men in their destined work. This is not the place in which to give the history and character of Clive and Hastings; but the following notice of the position of them and of Dupleix, individually and relatively, by Miss Martineau, presents a picture as striking and instructive as it is well drawn. Selecting the year 1732 as an epoch, both in India and England, the gifted lady referred to briefly points out the state of things in Bengal, and shows how the arrival of Dupleix changed matters in French interests, small as were the positions and opportunities which he found there:—"The hour and the man had arrived for the French; and the hour and the man were approaching for the English. While the great Dupleix was beginning his reforms there in the prime vigour of his years, a child in England was giving almost as much annoyance to his relations as he was hereafter to cause to Dupleix. The Spaniards say that 'the thorn comes into the world point foremost.' It was so in this case. The uncle of little Robert Clive, then in his seventh year, wrote a sad character of him. 'Fighting, to which he is out of measure addicted,' said his uncle, 'gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness that he flies out on every trifling occasion.' At the same date, there was born in a poor parsonage in Worcestershire a forlorn infant, the son of

a father married at sixteen, and soon after dead, and of a mother who died a few days after the orphan's birth, leaving him to the care of a grandfather sunk in trouble and poverty. No one living could then have divined what connection could exist among the destinies of these three. Nor would it have been easier to guess seven years later. At that later date Dupleix had purchased no less than seventy vessels, to carry his commodities to all parts of the known world, extinguishing in Bengal the English reputation for commercial ability, and bringing splendid returns to his own coffers. Robert Clive was then full of mischief—sitting on a spout at the top of the lofty steeple of Market Drayton church, and levying a blackmail of apples and halfpence, with his rabble rout of naughty boys at his heels, on the tradesmen who feared for their windows. As for little Warren, the orphan, then seven years old, he was lying beside the brook which flows through the lands of his ancestry, and, as he himself told afterwards, making up his mind to the personal ambition of his life—to be, like his forefathers of several generations, Hastings of Daylesford. On these three—the ambitious and unscrupulous French manager, already at his work, the turbulent English schoolboy, and the romantic child, dreaming under the great ancestral oaks, while living and learning among ploughboys—the destinies of British India were to hang. Through them we were to hold India as a territory, and by a military tenure; and to have a policy there, perhaps as important to the human race in the long run as that of the mother country—however much may be comprehended in that abstraction."\*

While the men and the home affairs of the company were maturing, by which the second half of the eighteenth century was to be influenced, and England to win an empire, many things were occurring in India which drifted in the same direction. Of these the company were not ignorant, and it is obvious that the directors were more observant of the political tendency of affairs in the Mogul empire, and the true policy to be observed in consequence, than historians generally give them credit for.†

Early in the eighteenth century the directors sent out specific orders to Bengal for their servants to *attend to the revenues*, and avoid all complications with the natives, and all attempts to extend the company's terri-

\* *British Rule in India: a Historical Sketch.* By Harriet Martineau.

† *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India.* By Peter Auber, M.R.A.S. London, 1837.



tory.\* The following passage from their instructions shows the prudence which prevailed among the directors:—"Notwithstanding the doubts we had, whether it would be our interest to have the thirty-eight towns if granted, or whether they might not engage us in quarrels with the Moors,† if hereafter they should be resolved to take them away when they found them to flourish, of which, we find, by paragraph 85, you say, it would be of great use to us to have them. Having well weighed the profit on one side, and the trouble that may at one time or other be calculated upon on the other, we think it best for us to have only so many of them (when you can purchase them) as lie contiguous to our three towns above and below them, and those on the other side of the river within the same extent of ground as the towns, when purchased, reach on your side. . . . We suppose, too, that when Jaffer Khan, or any other governor, finds you desire only part of what you might insist on, he or they may be the easier to give their consent, and not pick future quarrels; *for as our business is trade, it is not political (politic) for us to be encumbered with much territory.*" In another communication a few years later similar opinions were expressed:—"Remember, we are not fond of much territory, especially if it lies at a distance from you, or is not pretty near the water side, nor, indeed, of any, unless you have a moral assurance it will contribute, directly or in consequence, to our real benefit."‡

The making of roads in a country where military operations may be necessary to preserve it, is recognised as a feature of military management which should always characterize the policy of occupying forces. The directors appear during the first quarter of the eighteenth century to have directed the attention of their servants to this important matter in the neighbourhood of their chief settlements, "as well to see through your bounds into the country of the zemindars, who attacked you some time before, as to facilitate the march of your soldiers when necessary to support your utmost outguards."§ Sanitary as well as military advantage from the foregoing expedient was anticipated by the directors, for they add, "thereby the wind hath a free passage into the town, and likewise contributes to its healthiness."||

The acquisition of the native languages on the part of their agents also engaged the

attention of the directors. During the discussions which pervaded the London daily press in 1857-8 about the government of India it was frequently asserted that the company had discredibly neglected the encouragement of their agents in this particular. There is abundant official documentary evidence to the contrary. Minute instructions are given in several of the letters of the directors concerning "the writers"—such as "encourage them all to learn the country languages, which are sooner attained by youth than by men grown."\*

In 1725 the letters of the directors were chiefly designed to check extravagance, and insure more implicit obedience on the part of their servants.

Frequently the communications of the committee in London show a statesmanlike recognition of the events which were passing around their settlements and factories as the Mogul empire fell to pieces like a building sapped at its foundations. Thus, at the close of the first quarter of the century, they write to their chief agent at Calcutta:—"The battle you mentioned to be fought by the vizier, wherein he was successful against the king's army, and killed the general, Mombarras Cawn, his sons, and several Omrahs, does, in our opinion, show that affairs in the Mogul's dominions are in the utmost confusion, and tend towards some extraordinary crisis. Our advices from Fort St. George say that the said vizier, Chicklis Cawn, was in the Metchlepatam country, and from thence intended to march to Bengal to enlarge his power. Time only must discover the event of these troubles; in the interim keep a watchful eye to preserve yourselves from danger, and keep up your friendship with the Hoogly government, which may be the more necessary in this critical juncture."†

The communications of the directors with their Bengal agents during 1731-2 explain the state of feeling in England towards the company, throw some light upon the origin of the public dissatisfaction, and reveal the fact, in contradiction of most modern writers who relate the home affairs of the company at that period, that the secret transactions of the directors were conducted with decision and energy:—"The badness of the goods sent us for two years past having not only raised a general clamour among the buyers, but also great uneasiness in the proprietors of the company's stock, and we being convinced that there has been a culpable neglect in the management of our affairs by the unequal

\* Letter to Bengal, 3rd of February, 1719.

† The name then given commonly in England to all black races.

‡ General letter to Bengal, 16th of February, 1721.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid.

\* General letter to Bengal, 16th of February, 1721, and 14th of February, 1722.

† Letter to Bengal, the 1st of December, 1725.



sortment of the goods, deficiencies in their lengths and breadths, and excessive high prices, together with the vast quantities of fine unvendable articles sent us, contrary to our orders, and having kept back great quantities of goods we wanted and ordered, and have been employed for their private trade; by the first we are great sufferers, and by the last we are deprived of great profits that we might naturally have expected, those goods being greatly in demand; for these reasons, and to strike terror to those that succeed, we have thought fit to dismiss from our service six members. This extraordinary step we have been obliged to take, in order to remedy these and any such like evils, and to clear our reputations from the censure the world would otherwise throw upon us, that we connived at the bad actions of our servants, hereby convincing mankind that we are not biassed with favour or affection to any particular person whatsoever.”\*

The sagacity of the directors as to the effects upon themselves, as well as their servants, of any extravagance in the latter, is shown in their correspondence a little later, in reply to some favourable communications as to the improved habits of “the writers” which had been received from Calcutta:—“We are highly pleased that the extravagant way of living which had obtained such deep rooting among you is entirely laid aside. Whenever such a practice prevails in any of our servants, we shall always suspect that we are the paymasters in some shape or other, and it seldom fails of bringing them to penury and want; we must, therefore, both for your sakes and our own, earnestly recommend frugality as a cardinal virtue, and by a due regard to the said advice, we do not doubt but the diet and other allowances from us will be amply sufficient to defray all necessary expenses, as Bengal is not only the cheapest part of India to live in, but perhaps the most plentiful country in the whole world.”†

The year following directions were sent out to regulate the conduct of the agents towards the company’s tenants, which are full of justice, wisdom, and foresight.‡

At the close of the year 1735 the company were fully cognisant of the progress of the French in India, and warned their agents of the coming peril—a peril so soon realized, so painfully experienced, so gloriously surmounted, and so efficiently turned to the interests of the company, and the welfare, honour, and glory of their nation:—“Now the French are settled at Patna, our chief

and council must double their diligence, and keep all the Assamys they can true to our interest, and advance such of them as comply with their contracts sufficient sums of money to carry on their business, being cautious to make as few bad debts as possible. We should esteem it an agreeable piece of service if a year’s stock of petre beforehand always lay at Calcutta, and as such recommend it to you, to use your utmost endeavours to accomplish it, provided it can be done without advancing the price, which, when obtained, will answer very valuable purposes.”\*

The council referred to in this paragraph of the letter of the directory was “a council of nine,” appointed a few years previously, and which had its origin in the dissatisfaction felt by the directors with the assortment of piece goods sent them from Bengal, and the losses or low profits derived in consequence in the English market.

The growing energy of the Mahrattas drew the attention of the company to the necessity of superior defences for their stations, and for the first time, in their letter to Bengal, dated the 21st of March, 1743, the hiring of Lascars is referred to as desirable for the defence of Calcutta, a class often brought into requisition afterwards, and who proved generally useful in the service of the coasting trade, from the first acquisitions of the company in Bengal until its political extinction in 1858.

The administration of justice in India engaged the company’s attention at home.†

The above proofs of the sedulous care of the directors are taken from their correspondence to their chief at Calcutta. Their letters to the other presidencies disclose the same industry and anxiety for the interests of the proprietary, and the welfare of such of the people of India as were committed to the company’s charge. The correspondence with Fort St. George discloses such a multiplicity of subjects calling for the attention of the directors, and reveals so much acquaintance with Indian affairs, as to corroborate the allegation of industry and ability ascribed to them, and confute the assertion of Mr. Mill, that the company at this period knew little about India, and left the guidance of affairs there to their agents, being to a great extent merely passive spectators.

In the letters to Madras, municipal institutions, local duties, the introduction of native weavers to that place, relief to the distressed during a period of famine, the incursions of the Mahrattas, as well as all the varied topics

\* Letter to Bengal, the 3rd of December, 1731.

† Letter to Bengal, the 31st of January, 1734.

‡ Letter to Bengal, January, 1735.

\* Letter to Bengal, the 12th of December, 1735.

† Letter to Bengal, the 9th of March, 1747.



of trade are discussed in the most minute and ample manner.

In the correspondence with this presidency the same vigilance was shown as in the Bengal letters, concerning the progress of the French, so soon to be the great topic of interest in India and Europe. Thus the directors write:—"The most particular intelligence procurable concerning those powerful competitors, the French, and their commerce, must be annually communicated to us, inserting the number of ships, tonnage, imports, and exports, with the situation of their affairs, and our other rivals in trade upon the coast of Ccomandel."\*

The communications made to the Bombay presidency involved as many subjects, and as intricate; and it is impossible to pursue the maze trodden by the thoughts of the directors without admiring their dexterity and capacity for transacting business on a large scale, and involving vast social and political interests. Who can refuse the meed of approbation to such sentiments as these, designed to guide the Bombay president in his relations to the native powers?—"So far, indeed, we will grant that it is prudent to suspect them, and to be upon your guard, but there is a great deal of difference in point of charges betwixt a defensive and offensive state of war, which latter must always be the case while we live in open war; besides, the continuing in such a state compels our enemies to increase their forces, and makes them by degrees to become

formidable. And what is the end of all? Why, we have a great deal to lose, and they have nothing of any value that you can take from them."\*

The president at Bombay was put upon his guard against the French, but not in terms so frequent or urgent as those of Madras and Caleutta.

It is impossible to peruse such documents without the conviction that much that has been culled by modern writers from the archives of the now defunct India House has been selected for a partial purpose, and unfairly represents the general tenor and full scope of the motives, policy, and procedure of the company at home.

The interests of the company in the Eastern Archipelago were not of that importance during the first half of the eighteenth century which they ultimately became, and which, in the earlier expeditions of the company's captains, they bid fair to become. But the directors were hardly the less exempt from trouble and anxiety on their account. If the rising star of the French threw a blighting ray upon their prospects in continental India, the withering avarice and tenacious power of the Dutch were calculated to check enterprise beyond the Straits, and to render it, when undertaken, a source of the deepest concern to the directors.

To the company's interests as involving competition with various European societies attention must now be turned.

## CHAPTER LVI.

### THE OSTEND COMPANY.

WHEN the political and religious despotism of Spain had forced the best of her maritime provinces in Europe to appeal to the sword—the final arbiter between the oppressor and the oppressed—and they had nobly, after a fierce and dubious struggle, achieved their independence, the seven united provinces of the Netherlands were received into the rank of nations, and by the rapid development of those powers which they had displayed in the struggle, applied to the cultivation of their resources, they acquired wealth, power, and dominion, chiefly at sea.

His catholic majesty, who had been the legal sovereign of the Austrian or Spanish dominions, and of the United or Dutch

Netherlands, ceded to Albert and Isabella the ten provinces that continued faithful to him when the seven others had thrown off the yoke. This happened in 1598; and in the deed of conveyance it was declared that none of their subjects should be at liberty to send any ships, or to traffic in either the East or West Indies, upon any pretence whatever. In vain they remonstrated. Philip, considering that the removal of the prohibition would be prejudicial to Spain, rejected peremptorily all these appeals. The trade of the united provinces was consequently ruined; their cities, formerly hives of industry, were stripped of their populations; and even Antwerp, renowned through the commercial world as its capital, the emporium of

\* Letter to Fort St. George, the 30th of December, 1737.

\* Letter to Bombay, 1741.

Europe, was reduced almost to a solitude, its harbour without shipping, and its marts deserted.

By the demise of the Archduchess Isabella her dominions reverted to Spain; and the king, to ingratiate the Cardinal Infanta with his new subjects, granted the Netherlands liberty to trade to those parts of India open to the Portuguese then subject to the crown of Spain. But of this favour they did not reap the advantage; for in the very year it was granted (1640) Portugal asserted her independence, and obtained entire sway over such Indian possessions as the Dutch had not yet wrested from them.\* Unfortunately, as it subsequently transpired, no evidence remained of this concession except a letter from the Infanta, which merely asserts that his majesty had such an intention.

The year 1698 arrived before any further effort was made to open the trade with the East. Charles II. of Spain granted his subjects a charter to trade to such parts of India and the coasts of Guinea as were not occupied by other European states. His death deprived them of the opportunity of availing themselves of the privilege, for on his demise, in 1700, the succession to the throne was contested, as already observed, and the war which ensued convulsed Europe for the space of thirteen years. When peace was concluded, the Netherlands fell under the dominion of Austria, and remained subject to the same restrictions which affected them under the Spanish sceptre, and they were thus excluded from the trade of the East, as they had been for several years. Thus they continued until Prince Eugene of Savoy was placed over them as governor-general, when another attempt was made to open a correspondence for them with the East. The emperor was favourable to this movement; and the fact is, that the narrow-minded policy of Philip had reduced to poverty these once industrious and prosperous provinces. They were at this time actually a burthen on the empire. There was an obstacle, however, in the way, and that was the jealousy with which the European monopolists of the Asiatic trade looked upon any new comer. Preparations were privately made, and two ships were dispatched, equipped by private individuals, and furnished with royal passports. After a long delay, they started on their voyage in 1717. Having been successful, several other merchants resolved to make a venture. The trade continued to be prosecuted for some time in the same unostentatious manner. Some foreign merchants, who were aware

of this auspicious commencement, made proposals to the court of Vienna for the formation of an East India Company, with the emperor's charter for a certain number of years. Their proposals were received, and every disposition to favour the scheme manifested.

In the meantime—in October, 1719—advices reached Vienna that one of the passported vessels had been seized by a Dutchman in the service of the West India Company on the coast of Guinea, and confiscated, with her whole cargo, in the most summary and questionable manner.\* The emperor made an immediate demand for satisfaction and compensation for the sufferers. So little regard was paid to the imperial demand that another ship belonging to Ostend was soon after captured by the Dutch East India Company. The merchants of Ostend, with a spirit worthy of a happy result, declining further negotiations, with all possible expedition fitted out some vessels of war, with which they meant to make reprisals. They put to sea with the emperor's commission; Captain Winter, the master of the ship that had been captured on the coast of Guinea, commanded one of them. Conceiving that he was justified by his commission, he proceeded to the Downs, and there meeting with his own ship, he seized her, with a cargo of ivory and gold-dust, the property of the West India Company. That company complained to the states-general, whose ministers at Brussels and Vienna energetically remonstrated, and were warmly supported by the influence of Great Britain; but after the recent refusal of the Dutch to satisfy the imperial government, it could scarcely be expected that Austria would hearken to these demands, unless under the influence of fear. Austria on this occasion maintained her dignity; the ministers at Vienna remained firm, and insisted that the subjects of the emperor having first suffered, it was but reasonable they should be the first redressed. This reply was no small evidence of independence, considering the great naval strength of the remonstrant powers, who it was evident had agreed to make common cause. The firmness of the Austrian ministers gave confidence to the empire; and such a popular fervour was created in favour of the projected company that, in the year 1720, five large ships were fitted out, and in the year following six more—three for China, one for Mocha, one for Surat and the coast of Malabar, and the sixth for Bengal.

This independent spirit roused the ire of the Dutch to such a degree, that they seized on a vessel richly laden by the merchants of

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 294.

\* *La Vérité du Droit*, &c. Bruxelles, quarto, 1723.



Bruges, and sold her cargo, notwithstanding the interference of his imperial majesty. The English were not inactive; they also captured an Ostend homeward-bound vessel on the shores of Malabar very richly laden. These misfortunes so disheartened the new company that orders were issued to lay up a new vessel just completed. However, this despondency was of brief duration. In the months of May and June, 1721, two of their ships arrived from the Indies, and in the following December two more. Their cargoes were sold at a price which amply indemnified them for their recent losses, and left them a balance which enabled them to pursue their commerce with greater vigour than ever. All that appeared to them necessary to their permanent success was a legal establishment; but though the emperor had authorized the associated merchants in 1719 to take in subscriptions for a joint-stock company, and even specified some of the privileges he was disposed to grant to them as a corporation, yet being unwilling to come to an open rupture with the Dutch, he would have much preferred them to continue to trade under the authority of his passports, which they might receive as individuals. The merchants, elevated by prosperity, both present and prospective, and regardless, even if observant, of the inconvenience\* it would be, particularly at that juncture, to quarrel with the maritime powers having money at their disposal, resolved to use their utmost efforts to command the best possible position; and with this object they commissioned some of their directors to proceed to Vienna, where they had friends of great court influence. These directors were liberally supplied with instructions, and, what is often more effective, good bills for a large amount of money. Their mission was successful; and they succeeded in obtaining a charter, the privileges conceded by which were co-extensive with their demands, and as liberal as that of any company in Europe.† It comprised several articles, the principal of which were—that the capital was to consist of ten million florins, in shares of one thousand each; the prizes which their vessels might make in time of war were to be entirely their own, and to be sold for their profit; all the ammunition, provisions, artillery, and naval stores requisite for the forts and factories of the company were exempted from duties and impositions in their passage through the territories of the emperor, or any of the lordships or ecclesiastical communities in the Low Countries; and, lastly, all the goods transported

by the company's ships were to pay for all customs and duties, inwards and outwards, four per cent. and no more, till the expiration of the month of September, 1724, and from that six per cent. for ever. An ambassador, invested with the necessary powers, was also sent to the court of Delhi to settle an alliance with the emperor, and to thank him in his imperial majesty's name for the permission he had granted the company, not only to erect a factory, but a fort, to protect their commerce in his dominions. The great expectation which his imperial majesty had formed of the future of this undertaking, of the addition it would bring to the wealth of his subjects and to the public revenues, influenced him to hold out still further encouragement than he had hitherto done. He intimated that he would remit all duties and customs for the period of three years, and would make the proprietors a present of three hundred thousand florins in ready money, to indemnify them against any losses they might sustain in the first stages of their operations.

The liberality and munificence of the sovereign found an echo amongst not only his own subjects, who all—merchants, bankers, nobles, and gentlemen—displayed the utmost zeal, but also English, French, and Dutch, concerned in naval and mercantile affairs, united in support of the undertaking.

The widely-spread fame which the company had already acquired, the enthusiasm excited in its favour, the patronage with which it was supported, the resources at its command, the preparations it had initiated, the great and comprehensive objects at which it aimed, startled all the maritime nations of Europe; a common fear for their commerce pervaded them, one and all, and an identity of interests bound them to combine for mutual protection. In these days of more enlightened views, when exclusiveness in trade is practically shown to be as prejudicial as most monopolies, the feverish anxiety manifested by our forefathers at the exhibition of a strong competitor in the market can be scarcely appreciated, unless by a few antiquated protectionists. "We need not wonder," says an able historian of the middle of the last century, "that this new company at Ostend should occasion such noise throughout all Europe, or excite great discord and disturbance, so as to render the chapter that treats of the Ostend Company as remarkable a part of general history as any that finds a place therein."\* The warmest allies and most

\* *Mémoire Historique et Politique*, tom. lxx. pp. 676—781.

† *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 1165.

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. p. 66; Macpherson's *Commercial Dictionary*; Postlethwaite's *Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*.



faithful friends of the emperor were the most violent in their opposition.

On the 5th of April, 1723, Pestors, the Dutch minister at Brussels, presented to the Marquis de Prie, the Austrian governor of the Netherlands, a memorial setting forth that by a treaty of Munster, in the year 1648, the Spaniards and the Dutch had agreed that each nation should preserve its trade and navigation within the East Indies as it was then conducted. He observed that the Dutch had assisted the emperor to obtain the dominion of the Netherlands, and that they could not expect so bad a return as the establishment of a trade in direct violation of that treaty, and of the confirmation of that treaty by the twenty-sixth article of the barrier treaty, wherein it was expressly stipulated, that commerce and all that depends upon it, in whole and in part, should remain on the footing established, and in the manner appointed, by the articles of the treaty of Munster; that the barrier treaty was guaranteed by the King of Great Britain, at a time when his imperial majesty was actually King of the Netherlands, the inhabitants of which could elaim no other rights by passing from the dominion of Spain to that of the emperor, than those they enjoyed by the treaty of Munster as subjects of Spain. He concluded by requesting that the patent *said* to have been granted should not be published or should be revoked, and that no ships should be allowed to sail from the Netherlands to India, either by virtue of a patent or any other kind of authority.

The Marquis de Prie, who had a personal interest besides the national one in the success of the company, as he was deriving great emolument from the temporary licenses to the ships, and would derive a far greater from an increasing trade, advised his sovereign against granting the charter. Prince Eugene and his other ministers also represented to him that the establishment of the proposed company could not fail to give offence to the maritime powers by whose means he had become the monarch of the Netherlands, and that on these grounds the measure was equally inconsistent with his interest and with his dignity.\*

The English East India Company also entered their protest, and expressed their uneasiness at seeing the progress of the Netherlands; and they complained that much of the capital invested was by British subjects, that the trade was conducted by men brought up in their service, who were seduced, by extravagant pay and promises, to employ

their talent and extensive knowledge of the Indian trade to the prejudice of their native land. This last seems to be the only feasible plea they had.

In the year 1721 the British parliament had passed an act (7th George I., cap. 21), for a rigorous enforcement of the penalties formerly enacted against British subjects going to India in the service of foreigners, and against smugglers of Indian goods into any part of the British dominions. This act, however, had little effect: another (9th George I., cap. 26) was passed in 1723, more expressly prohibiting English subjects from being concerned in the proposed company for carrying on the East India trade from the Austrian Netherlands, on penalty of triple the value of their subscriptions to the capital of that company, or imprisonment. British subjects found in any part of India, and not in the service of the East India Company, are declared to be guilty of high misdemeanour, and are to be seized and sent to England, in order to be punished. The minister of his Britannic majesty at Vienna also protested; yet the emperor, strong in what he believed to be the justice of his case, resolved not to submit to dictation, and, abandoning the cautious line of policy he had hitherto prudently pursued, in August, 1723, published the charter which had been prepared in December, 1722, and postponed in deference to the protestations of the English and Dutch.

In the preamble to the charter,\* the emperor not only took all the titles of the house of Austria, he also added to them that of King of Spain, and styled himself King of the East and West Indies, the Canary Islands, the Islands of the Ocean, &c. He granted to the company for thirty years the right of trading to the East and West Indies, and to both sides of Africa.

Satisfied that they would procure their charter, the company had, in January previously, dispatched a vessel for Bengal, in order to take possession of the fort there, which the Emperor of Delhi had some time before permitted them to build for the security of their factory.

No sooner had the company opened subscription books than their head offices at Antwerp were crowded and encircled with applicants for shares. At noon next day the subscriptions were filled, and before the month closed, the shares sold at a premium of from twelve to fifteen per cent.

The Dutch companies, both East and West Indian, demanded permission to oppose the Ostend Company by force of arms. The

\* Macpherson *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 296.

\* The charter was published at Brussels, in Latin, German, Flemish, English, and French.



French king, chagrined to find that after repeated attempts he could not achieve what at Antwerp was accomplished in a day, issued an *arrêt*, by which he strictly forbade his subjects taking shares in it, entering into its service, or selling them any ships, and threatening the offenders with confiscation and imprisonment. In the year following, the King of Spain pursued a like course.

These jealous precautions, and those of the nations more immediately interested, did not impede the successful prosecution of the enterprisc. The speculations of the new company progressed prosperously at home and abroad. Most of their officers, who had served under the foreign companies, perfectly understood their duties; and, from their local knowledge, had very little difficulty in convincing the Indian princes and chief men that it was their interest to encourage in their markets as many competitors as possible, and thus they counteracted the strenuous efforts made by the active agents of their rivals to exacerbate the nations of India against them. With extraordinary rapidity several factories were established, and a far-spreading and profitable intercourse with the rajahs of the district cultivated. They made two settlements, that of Coblom, between Madras and Sadras-Patnam, on the coast of Coromandel, and that of Bankisabar on the Ganges, and were in search of a place in the Island of Madagascar, where their ships might touch for refreshments.\*

An unexpected event occurred about this time, which promised to secure the future of the company. Philip of Spain entered into close alliance with the emperor, his late rival for the throne of Spain, and whose pretensions, supported by the arms of Great Britain and the United Provinces, had devastated that kingdom, and produced a long and ruinous conflict amongst the powers of Europe. By one of the treaties—that which is dated May, 1725, and particularly relates to commercial matters—it was provided that the ships of the contracting parties should be received in a friendly manner into each other's ports, "which same proviso is also to take place in the East Indies, on condition that they do not carry on any trade there, nor be suffered to buy anything besides victuals, and such materials as they want for repairing and fitting out their vessels." By this article the liberty was conceded to the company's ships of obtaining refreshments, and of repairing in Spanish ports which are conveniently placed for those sailing to or from China. A market in Europe, and seemingly also in the Spanish colonies, was pro-

\* Raynal's *History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. iii. p. 31.

vided for them by the thirty-sixth article, which engages that "his imperial majesty's subjects and ships shall be allowed to import all sorts of produce and merchandise from the East Indies, into any of the states and dominions of the King of Spain, provided it appears from the certificates of the East India Company erected in the Austrian Netherlands that they are the produce of the places conquered, the colonies or factories of the said company, or that they came there; and in this respect they shall enjoy the same privileges which were granted to the subjects of the United Provinces by the royal cedulas of the 27th of June and 3rd of July, 1663."

The publication of this treaty impressed friends and foes with the conviction that the company rested on a firm and secure basis; but the more profoundly observant detected the seeds of future trouble in this apparently desirable arrangement, and a few of the partners availed themselves of the opportunity of selling out while prospects seemed so fair and promising.

Considering the alarming sensation created by the incorporation of the Ostend Company, it will not appear to be a matter of surprise that all the nations whose interests were thought to be at stake by it were struck with consternation. A large party for a long period existed in Spain, who looked upon the exclusive possession of its colonial trade as the highest and most valuable prerogative of the crown;\* by which, indeed, they were particularly distinguished from the rest of the subjects of that monarchy, who were all prohibited from a participation in it—and were as hostile to the late opening of it as any of the English, French, and Dutch. To such an extent was this dissatisfaction carried, that a proclamation was affixed to the gate of the Spanish ambassador in Rome, containing these words:—"The Spanish nation do hereby promise a reward of a hundred pistoles to any ingenious person who shall point out a single article in the three treaties lately concluded at Vienna, by which they are to be gainers."†

To counterbalance this alliance between Austria and Spain, the sovereigns of Great Britain, France, and Prussia formed a treaty in the September following, by which they guaranteed the integrity of the territories belonging to each "in and out of Europe;" and also "all the rights, immunities, and advan-

\* See on this subject *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 198, in which it is stated, and truly, that it was in submission to this feeling that Philip, in 1638, rejected the petition of the Netherlanders for permission to trade to the Spanish settlements.

† *Recueil Historique d'Actes, Négociations, Mémoires et Traités*. Par. M. Rousset, tom. ii. p. 214.



tages—particularly those relating to trade—which the said allies enjoy, or ought to enjoy, respectively.” \*

The states-general hesitated and deliberated for a considerable time before they consented to be a subscribing party to this compact, and did not officially become so till August, 1726.

In the interval, while these machinations were being perfected, the company was advancing with rapid strides. Several ships had arrived from India and China freighted with valuable cargoes, the sales of which amounted to above five million florins. In September, 1726, a meeting of the proprietors was held, and the directors had the agreeable duty of placing to the account of each two hundred and fifty florins, the complement due on each, seven hundred and fifty only having been paid out of the thousand. This addition was equal to a dividend of thirty-three and a half per cent. on the capital paid up and employed in the trade.

The alliance formed between Austria and Spain being based on personal and selfish motives, was sacrificed for still more selfish ones. The royal confederates, with whom were united the Dutch republic, having guaranteed to support the pragmatic sanction—the object of which was to secure the succession of Maria Theresa to her father's, the emperor's, dominions—the object dearest to his heart, the interests of the Ostend Company, was sacrificed as a matter of minor consideration. By a treaty concluded in May, 1727, it was agreed that their privileges should be suspended for seven years, during which no ship was to sail from Ostend for India, but those which were on the voyage were insured an unmolested return; and should any of them, in ignorance of the treaty, be taken, they were to be freely restored.

In a treaty between England and Austria, which was signed March 16, 1731, the succession of Maria Theresa was formally guaranteed by Great Britain; and the emperor, on his part, bound himself to the total suppression of the company, and never to permit any vessels to sail to India from the Austrian Netherlands, nor any other country which was subject to the crown of Spain, in the time of King Carlos II., reserving to the Ostend Company a right to send two ships, each only for one voyage to India, to receive the merchandise imported by them, and to sell the same, as they should think proper, at Ostend.

The suppression of the company did not

eradicate from the minds of the proprietors nor that of the emperor the wish and determination to pursue the trade they had so auspiciously commenced, provided it could be persevered in without violation of the recent treaty. They had only two ways left, and neither of them promising, by which that could be done—the first to make use of some port in the Austrian dominions which never owed allegiance to Spain; the second, to make a convenience of a port belonging to a foreign prince. From either of these they thought they could trade under the authority of passports as before.

The only ports belonging to Austria, besides those of the Netherlands, were Trieste and Fiume, both at the head of the Gulf of Venice, but neither fit by art nor nature for the purpose. There was no roadstead for large vessels. The emperor, who was as desirous as any one interested for the establishment of an East India trade, did everything in his power to improve them, and paid a visit in the year 1728 to Trieste, and was present at the launching of a small ship-of-war, and personally encouraged the men who were engaged in making the projected improvements. At length these undertakings were abandoned as fruitless; and the emperor and his subjects, with regrets the more bitter from the promise of their former efforts, were obliged to relinquish all share in the advantages of Indian commerce.

Expelled from their native land, the company sought in foreign countries that asylum which at home they were obliged to abandon. They applied to the Kings of Poland and Prussia, and from both they received assurances of protection and passports. But those feeble powers could not shield them from the enmity of the great nations who sought their utter annihilation. The *Saint Theresa*, while sailing under Polish colours, was seized in the Ganges, and confiscated. It is true the Polish minister remonstrated; but what chance had he against governments who braved, in the same cause, the formidable union of Austria and Spain? The *Apollo*, with a Prussian passport, entered the Elbe and reached Stade, a town then belonging to England. Here she was received as a Prussian craft, and also at Hamburg, where she arrived September, 1731. But when it was ascertained that she belonged to the Ostend Company, and had landed the greater portion of her cargo, and the latter had been advertised for sale, the British and Dutch ministers presented a strong memorial to the magistrates of Hamburg, requiring them to sequester the ship and cargo. A general meeting of the inhabitants was convened to

\* The Ostend Company is not mentioned in this treaty, but obviously the words “particularly those relating to trade,” allude to the right claimed of opposing that company.—MACPHERSON.



consider the demand, and, much to their credit and independence, their deliberate reply was that the Elbe was free to the entire German empire; and all vessels, except those of the enemies of the empire and pirates, had a right to come into it; that they could not refuse to admit a vessel bearing the Prussian colours, more especially as she had been received as a Prussian ship in Stade, a port belonging to his Britannic majesty, and also at a port in Ireland, where she had called for refreshments; that they could not be justified in interfering with any ship in their port beyond demanding and receiving the customary duties. They therefore begged the King of England and the states-general not to insist upon what they had neither right nor power to do, nor to involve them in disputes between the higher powers of Europe. This reasonable and creditable remonstrance was ineffectual, and a second memorial was presented, the tone of which was menacing; but on further reflection, it was considered advisable not to push the matter to extremities, which might stimulate the emperor to vindicate the freedom of the Elbe, and the King of Prussia to support the honour of his flag. Ultimately the sale was completed, and at length the company consoled itself with, as they thought, having secured the means of carrying on their trade without interruption and with success.

While this matter was in debate, one of their vessels was homeward bound and daily expected: an advice boat was sent to meet it, with instructions to put into Cadiz, and there to await further instructions. At Cadiz the cargo was transported on board a French vessel, the commander of which signed bills of lading for the delivery of the goods as the property of a Spaniard at Cadiz, to a merchant at Hamburg. As soon as these transactions were communicated to the British and Dutch governments, a formal application was made to the emperor, soliciting him to put a stop to these infractions of the late treaties. To avoid a rupture, the emperor was advised to order his minister at Hamburg to request the senate to sequester the merchandise, as the property of a company whom he had suppressed, and who were prosecuting their trade in defiance of his orders. Though the senate, in reply, informed him that it was found by the ship's papers that the cargo was Spanish property, the emperor insisted, the goods were sequestered, and at length the senate was coerced to prohibit the citizens from having any concern with vessels or cargoes so circumstanced; but the proprietors were allowed to withdraw privately their goods. The decree by which this prohibition was proclaimed is dated the 15th of January, 1734.

The two ships which the company had a right to send according to the terms of the treaty of March, 1731, sailed from Ostend in April, 1732, and returned in the end of the year 1734.

The apparent facility with which the emperor abandoned a company in whose success he was so truly interested, and even contributed to their dissolution when he apparently might, with effect, have protested against the violation of the rights of such a city as Hamburg, and the flags of Poland and Prussia, when, as he was perfectly aware, it was his own interest and that of his subjects that were chiefly at stake, is no puzzle to the student of the history of that period, who is aware of the rapid fluctuation of politics which had characterized the relations of the European powers. At this very juncture the emperor was engaged in a war with the combined powers of France, Spain, and Sardinia, and the neutrality, if not the active adhesion, of the Protestant states was to be purchased at any price.

Before closing the chapter it may be well to say that in the hostility so determinedly shown to the establishment of the Ostend Company, the opponents to it were actuated by a motive as equally strong as commercial jealousy. In England and also in Holland it was argued "that the trade of the latter, if lost to her, would remove into the Austrian Netherlands, and that thereby the balance of power in Europe would be vested in the house of Austria, and the popish interest would be strengthened." And this consideration is the one which so firmly united England and Holland—whose mutual jealousies and rivalries were no secret—in their combined and persevering exertions to effect the ruin they so completely accomplished. In a pamphlet entitled "Importance of the Ostend Company Considered," which appeared in 1726, the question is thus effectively argued:—"That by the ruin of the trade of Holland, the power of Europe would be broken, and the Protestant interest weakened, is undeniable; for the United Provinces, with Great Britain, hold the balance, and are the supporters of the Protestant interest. Of the truth of this assertion the two last wars are an undeniable proof. For without the numerous and well paid troops of these two nations, what could the rest of the allies have done? Could they alone have obliged France to make such a peace as was concluded in 1697? Could they alone have driven the French troops out of the empire, or out of the Netherlands during the last war? Could they alone have maintained in Flanders forces superior in number to those of France? Could they alone have carried on the war in



Portugal and Spain? Could they alone have been powerful enough to force King Philip to abandon Spain, as would have certainly happened, humanly speaking, if the fatal change of our ministry had not interposed and prevented it? No, certainly not. It was the wealth and the riches of Great Britain, and of the United Provinces, that enabled them to maintain so many troops as put the allies into a condition, not only of making head against France, but gave them a superiority in number to the forces of that crown, and enabled them to fit out such large fleets, as kept the naval power of France in awe, and thereby preserved the liberties of Europe from becoming a prey to the boundless ambition of Louis XIV.; and therefore, by their wealth and riches, they are equally powerful to protect, support, and defend the Protestant interest from being oppressed by the popish powers of Europe." And it proceeds to show, had not these Protestant powers acted in union during the struggle, the Protestant interest in Europe, in all human probability, would have been sacrificed. It then proceeds: "Thus it plainly appears that when the powers of Great Britain and the United Provinces are the supporters of their liberties, that it is a maxim among the powers of this part of the world, not to suffer either of these nations to become a prey to the House of Austria or Bourbon. . . . But suppose the United Provinces should sit still and not join its forces in favour\* of the liberties of Europe, or the Protestant interest, Great Britain could not be powerful enough to give such an additional assistance as would equal what the United States would or could do, and *vice versa*. Consequently Great Britain or the United Provinces cannot support the liberties of Europe or the Protestant interest without the assistance of the other."† "That the balance of power would be turned to the side of the house of Austria, and the popish in-

terest strengthened thereby, are the necessary and unavoidable consequences. For since by the ruin of Holland, one of the supporters of the balance of power of Europe would be destroyed, and no other nation would rise up in its stead,—for the Hollanders would be so dispersed as not to make any nation become powerful enough to undertake with Great Britain so great a charge,—and we could not alone be able to maintain it;—and since most of the popish merchants of Holland would retire to Antwerp, Ghent, and Bruges in the Austrian Netherlands, and consequently draw to those towns all the trade they carried on in Holland,—it is manifest that the Austrian Netherlands would soon become the staple of all Europe as formerly, and soon grow as rich and powerful as Holland now is. Whereby the mighty power of the House of Austria, supported and strengthened by the riches and wealth of the Netherlands, would so inevitably be threatening ruin to the rest of Europe, as it would now endanger its liberties, if backed by all the force and wealth of Holland. And that the popish interest would be strengthened by the ruin of Holland is a consequence thereof. Because no new Protestant state could arise in the room of Holland to join with Great Britain in supporting the Protestant interest. And we alone could not be the defenders of it, and therefore the popish interest would of course become too strong for the Protestant cause."\*

\* In a search made among the popular English literature of the time, the only pamphlets which were met with, was one entitled, Mr. Forman's Letter to the Right Hon. W. Pultney, showing how pernicious the Imperial Company of Commerce and Navigation lately established in the Austrian Netherlands, is likely to prove to Great Britain, as well as to Holland, printed in 1725, and the pamphlet quoted in the text, with the title there given. In the opening paragraph, the anonymous writer refers to Forman, whose letter, it appears, was published the year previous. Both pamphlets are seemingly the productions of Forman, and are so ranked in Watts's catalogue; we have quoted so freely from it in order to show that the popular feeling in England against the company was not one merely of commercial rivalry. Indeed such could have been scarcely the case in that day, when the English merchants, and nation at least, were opposed to the monopoly of the East India Company.

\* The author uses "against the liberties," it was a phrase of the time, the words, "the enemies of," being understood, p. 30.

† Pp. 6, 7, 8.



## CHAPTER LVII.

## THE DANES IN INDIA AND EASTERN ASIA.

As early as the eighth and ninth centuries the Danes had become the terror of northern nations; and from their piratical incursions England, Ireland, and Scotland suffered long and severely. The two former they succeeded in subjecting to their iron rule; and the last-mentioned, although injured by their descents, held out no temptation, as did the sister kingdoms, to the establishment of a permanent settlement. Normandy they also overran, and in it they succeeded in permanently settling. Their expeditions were in general maritime. To hazard the perils of crossing a stormy sea, three or four hundred miles in breadth, without the guidance of a compass, required no ordinary spirit of enterprise. The many islands with which the seas that break upon the shores of Denmark are studded made them familiar with the deep, and stimulated them to face more distant dangers. Thus to their maritime position they owed that superiority at sea which then neither England nor France, nor any other European state, had the means to dispute.

Few indeed of the kings of that country during the middle ages, until we descend to the reign of Valdemar II., displayed any eminent ability. This prince ascended the throne in 1203. Animated chiefly by religious zeal, he subdued the province of Livonia; but here his conquests in that direction ended, as the country held forth no inducements, commercially or politically, to extend his territories on the southern shores of the Baltic.

In those days the commerce of the Danes extended to Lubeck, the earliest commercial town of consequence, appropriately termed by modern writers the Venice of the Baltic; to the mouths of the Vistula, where they established a town—Dantzic\*—called after themselves; to the more remote provinces of Courland and Esthonia; and to Holstein. The Danes also fixed themselves in Naples, which they subdued, and thence sent their vessels to cruise upon the coast of Asia.†

At this time—the fourteenth century—the association of the Hanse Towns had risen to considerable power and greatness, and actively struggled for the freedom of commerce in the north of Europe. Denmark, commanding the great entrance to the Baltic, was frequently involved in conflict with them in its efforts to

enforce a toll upon all vessels trading to its waters; and to this imposition England, by treaty, submitted in the reign of Henry VII. (1490), but in return the English were allowed to appoint consuls in the chief seaports of Denmark and Norway.

It is not a matter of surprise that a people of the habits and pursuits of the Danes should share in the newly-evolved enthusiasm and enterprise which had then startled Europe into activity.\* Christian IV., who then held the sceptre, was a prince possessed of the qualities the time and occasion demanded. With a praiseworthy zeal for the improvement of his subjects, he stimulated their industrial aspirations. Manufactures were encouraged, and commercial pursuits promoted. A proposal which was made to him of opening a trade with the East Indies was received with avidity. Of the successes of the Portuguese, and of their immediate successors, the Dutch and English, he was fully apprised, and was desirous that his people should share the honours, experiences, and emoluments of such distant explorations. In the year 1612 he extended his sanction and encouragement to a body of enlightened and adventurous merchants in Copenhagen, who had associated for the purpose. A capital was raised by the issue of two hundred and fifty shares of a thousand rix dollars† each, for sending a squadron to the East Indies.‡ The officers in command were recommended to obtain a settlement on equitable terms, to preserve faith with the natives, and to avoid, as far as possible, any disputes with any of the European states there represented. With these prudent and politic instructions, and

\* The Portuguese and Spaniards had possession of the commerce of the East, and, it may be added, also of the West, for almost a century, which brought to them not merely the vast treasures of those rich and extensive quarters, but also the great portion of the wealth of Europe; but as soon as an opening was made for other European powers to that commerce, it is remarkable with what avidity the most of them entered into it. Elizabeth granted a charter to the first English East India Company on the 31st of December, 1600. The united states of Holland incorporated theirs by an *octroy*, dated the 20th of March, 1602; the French king, Henry IV., by his *arrêt*, dated the 1st of June, 1604, gave his approval to a similar association; and, as has been stated in the text, Christian IV., King of Denmark, granted his charter in 1612.

† A rix dollar is equivalent to about three shillings of English money.

‡ *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. iv. col. 754.

\* *Dantzic*, or *Dansvik*, signifies a Danish town or port.

† *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 2.



fortified with their sovereign's commission, the company's ships bore away to their remote destination from the Island of Zealand, and reached, in 1616, the coast of Coromandel.

In all probability the kind reception of the adventurers by the natives resulted from the observance of the judicious instructions given them at home. Having stipulated with the prince of the district in which they landed, the port of Tranquebar\* was conceded to them, and, to the credit of the Portuguese, few of whose good deeds are recorded by our historians, they exhibited no selfish rivalry; on the contrary, they assisted them in their negotiations for a settlement. In 1621 a fortress in the European style was erected for the protection of the harbour and the town.

The Danes had not been long in possession of this settlement, when a circumstance, both unforeseen and important, occurred which presented to them an opportunity of making a conspicuous figure in the East. To place this in full light, it is necessary to go back a few years from the period arrived at. In 1609 a truce, previously noticed, was made between the Spaniards and Dutch, who had been engaged in a long and tedious war. The states and the Prince of Orange thought it expedient to communicate the event to the King of Ceylon. This office was entrusted to Peter Both, who was sent to India as governor-general. On his reaching Bantam, a man in a very subordinate position, Van Boschower, was dispatched, invested with full powers. He was received at the court of Ceylon with the highest respect, and concluded a treaty, which was ratified by the Dutch governor and his council. He had, during his stay, ingratiated himself with the sovereign and his queen, and such were the inducements held out to him by them, that he consented to remain at their court. His was not the general fate of foreign favourites. He cultivated the good opinions of the natives, married a native lady of the first rank, was presented with a principality, and became the sovereign of some thousands of subjects, and the master of a considerable revenue. Displeased by the want of faith of the Dutch, and the violation of some terms of the treaty lately concluded through his agency, and hoping to be able to obtain redress from the states-general, he prevailed on the sovereign

to send him to Europe with the title of ambassador. He also was empowered, in case of failure with the united states, to treat with any European potentate. He started on his mission in May, 1615, accompanied by his wife. The man whom they had recently sent out in a very inferior capacity, the Dutch authorities would not recognise as a prince. This insult occasioned an interruption of the negotiations. After deliberation he proceeded to the court of Denmark, and arrived there in July, 1617. He was gratified with his reception. His proposals were eagerly received, and a treaty concluded with the company and Christian IV. A man-of-war was fitted out, and placed at his service, to convey him and his retinue to Ceylon. The company also sent some ships of theirs to accompany him. Their departure took place in 1619. On the voyage the ambassador died, and, through the impatience and offensive behaviour of the commander of the squadron on his arrival at Ceylon, an opportunity was lost to the Danes of establishing themselves on very favourable terms there, which seemed to have been providentially presented.

The settlement at Tranquebar was progressing in the meantime with a success truly astonishing, and far exceeding the realization of their most sanguine hopes. This prosperity induced them to undertake the establishment of factories upon the opposite coast of Malabar, where the pepper trade abounded, and of sending their ships to the most distant parts of India. In the short period of twenty years they had opened a trade with the Moluccas, and were by its proceeds enabled to send home large and rich cargoes from all parts of the peninsula; and Denmark could boast a trade inferior only to that of the Portuguese and Dutch.

This rapid and uninterrupted progress did not fail to incur the jealous notice of their European rivals; but a fortunate concurrence of circumstances restrained them one and all from overt acts of hostility. The Portuguese, subjected to the yoke of Spain, were manfully battling for their independence. The Spaniards very seldom sent their merchantmen beyond the Straits of Malacca. The Dutch had their attention engrossed by grasping at a monopoly of the spice trade; and the distractions by which England was rent limited her power in those distant seas. To this necessitated neutrality the Danes owed, in a very great measure, their rapid and uninterrupted growth; and furthermore, they derived from the distractions of the other European settlers elements of strength. On terms of amity with all, they extended their sympathies and aid in common, and furnished to all

\* Tranquebar is surrounded by the British district of Tanjore, and situated between two arms of the Cavery, a hundred and forty miles south-west of Madras. It is defended by bastion ramparts, faced with masonry, and at its south-east angle is the citadel of Dansburgh. The population numbers twenty-three thousand.—*MACCULLOCH'S Geographical Dictionary.*



applicants arms, ammunition, and provisions, and reaped enormous profits from this extensive trade.

The ultimate success, as already recorded, of the Dutch in the East, disturbed this commercial prosperity; and the Danes, in common with other European nations, found themselves excluded from several branches of trade, a considerable share of which they had previously possessed undisturbed, and which, if they had succeeded in retaining, would have enabled them to realize the brilliant hopes their short and successful career had justified them in entertaining.

The experience of the simple peasant has vulgarized the proverb, that "trouble never comes alone;" the philosophy of history enforces its truth by multiplied examples, and this period of Danish history supplies an instance. That good and wise prince, who cheered by his patronage into activity the awakening enterprise of his subjects, and who had been favoured with a life sufficiently long to witness the magnificent development of his infant project, at the crisis when the Danish adventurers of the East encountered the formidable rivalry of the Dutch, and were threatened with being swept from the path of their commercial speculations, became involved in the northern wars, and was thus incapacitated from forwarding from home those supplies of men and ships which the exigency so urgently demanded.

In fact, in consequence of the non-arrival of supplies from Europe, the regular communication with Tranquebar was interrupted, and with results which might be expected. The colonists were prevented from sending home their ships as they previously had done. Deprived of that market, their means were crippled, their commerce dwindled to an insignificant degree, and contrasted humilatingly with the apparent splendour of their town and fort, which they had magnificently embellished in the days of their prosperity; and so low had they sunk in a brief space, that they became contemptible, not alone to the Europeans, but to the natives.

In 1661 Gautier Schouten, the celebrated Dutch traveller, visited Tranquebar; and the statement which he has given of its condition may be relied on. He observes, as if it were something remarkable, that there were two Danish vessels in the harbour; and he adds, that their flags were but rarely visible in any other Indian port. He also records that they were on bad terms with the Moors, and in constant apprehension of their hostilities. In the midst of these dangers, and thrown upon their own unaided resources, the Danish settlers deserve the highest credit for the

determination with which they braved all, and succeeded in maintaining their position. In the height of their distress they prudently discharged with regularity, from the revenues of their town, their liabilities to their garrison, which they maintained in full strength. Their outposts, or rather dependent factories, on the Malabar coast, in Bengal, and a more considerable settlement at Bantam, supplied them with several kinds of commodities and manufactures, which were embarked on board the vessels they sent to Surat, into the Bay of Bengal, to the Straits of Malacca, and to the Island of Celebes.\* For want of sufficient capital, they were compelled to surrender this trade into the hands of the Moors and Hindoos, to whom they hired their ships. Their condition may be comprehended from the fact that during this time they were enabled to send to Europe only one vessel in the space of two or three years.†

The diminution of their consequence exposed them to more imminent danger; and the Rajah of Tanjore, within whose territories Tranquebar was situated, thought it was in his power to expel the Danes, and rid himself of their proximity. The splendid town and fortress which they had erected were temptations too strong for his sense of morality. On the slightest pretexts, and without just pretence, he sought cause of quarrel, and was in the constant practice of interrupting their land communications. This he was the more easily enabled to do, as the territory of Tranquebar extends only six miles from north to south, and three miles inland, constituting in all only fifteen square miles.‡ His daring soared so high, that he sometimes ventured to lay siege to the town and fortress; and it is related by an English traveller§ that on one occasion (1684) the Danes were reduced to such extremities as to be compelled to pawn three of their bastions to the Dutch for such a sum of money as would enable them to keep their garrison and the people of the town from dying by starvation. This aid they discharged the following year; but their having been enabled to do so strengthened some suspicions previously circulated, that in their distresses they sometimes had recourse to very questionable means for the replenishment of their exchequer. On this occasion these vague rumours assumed a more palpable form, and it was said that an English ship, called the

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, par Guyon, tom. iii. p. 77; *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 754.

† *Commerce des Danois aux Indes*, p. 51.

‡ Thornton's *Gazetteer of the Territories under the East India Company*.

§ Hamilton's *Account of the East Indies*, book i. p. 352.



*Formosa*, bound to Surat, and which had called at Calicut for supplies, and had never reached its destination, had met with foul treatment. This charge was sustained by the fact that continued discharges of cannon had been heard not long after she had sailed from Calicut, and at the same time two Danish vessels were cruising from Cape Comorin to Surat. Whatever degree of credibility may be placed in the charge against the Danes, it is a fact that the doubts were never satisfied.\*

Some bad feeling may have been engendered by the suspicions thus stated, but the English were not prevented by them from extending their assistance shortly after to the Danes in their utmost need. A large sum of ready money† was offered to their inveterate enemy, the Rajah of Tanjore, for the purchase of Tranquebar, when it should be in his power to deliver it. When this profligate bargain had come to the knowledge of the party most deeply concerned, they applied to Mr. Pitt, the English governor at Fort St. George, and were generously assured of succour should the exigency require it.

The rajah was fully resolved to complete his part of the contract, and made preparations to do so. He, with all the expedition he could command, assembled an army of between thirty and forty thousand, marched on Tranquebar, and cautiously commenced his offensive operations by opening trenches about a mile from the town. The soil being sandy and shifting, he began his work by planting two rows of cocoa-nut trees in close order, and at the requisite distance, and filled up the intervening space between the rows with sand. These trenches were nearly as thick as a town wall, and so high that the besiegers were covered from the fire of the Danes. They worked with such zeal and perseverance that in the space of five months they had pushed forward their trenches to within pistol-shot of the defences, and had with their batteries nearly destroyed one of the bastions, when the promised and cagerly expected English reinforcement arrived. It was much needed, for the Danish garrison was composed of two hundred Europeans only; an unequal number of Indian Portuguese, and

about one thousand natives, a force totally inadequate to defend a wall one mile and a half in circumference.

With the characteristic bravery of their countrymen, the English, though distrusting their raw levies, Hindoo and Portuguese, on the second day after their arrival, resolved on taking the field and provoking their enemies to a contest. As the sun rose, the small army of the besieged emerged from the gates, the native contingent leading the way, and the English in close order in their rear. The Hindoos had no sooner reached the plain than they treacherously divided to the right and left, leaving the small body of Europeans exposed to the numerous force of the enemy, who, with apparent resolution, emerged from their trenches in good order, armed with swords and shields, and seemingly prepared to engage hand to hand. The English and Danes, few in number, abandoned by the greater body of their little army, became apprehensive of the issue; but their confidence was soon restored, the first peal of the guns from their batteries struck terror into their timid foes. They fled in the utmost confusion, and their trenches would have been levelled, had the victors come prepared with implements for that purpose. In a few days after, a second sally was made with better preparations and greater success, which was entirely owing to the English, who, though left unsupported by the Danes, and deprived of the services of their commander—who had to retire at an early hour, severely wounded—charged and routed a body of musketeers and pikemen, and, subsequently, the Moorish horse, reached the trenches, and returned triumphantly with the loss of half their men to the town. This successful affair, so gallantly achieved, compelled the rajah to abandon the siege, and to leave the Danes in the enjoyment of their town, to recruit their impaired resources, and prosecute their commerce in peace.

As the consequence of the state of things here slightly sketched, but sufficiently ample for their relation to the principal objects of this history, the trade of the Danes in the East was reduced to a very low ebb at the opening of the eighteenth century. An effort was then made to give a new impulse to enterprise. The first movement was to enlarge the town, to increase the number of residents, in the hope that their revenues would improve and be better and more advantageously regulated. Application was accordingly made by the company to Frederick IV. a prince not unworthy to be a successor to Christian IV. Much of the depression and gloomy prospects of the Danish colonies he attributed to the neglect of religion, and the consequent laxity

\* The publicity given to this rumour at the period, and subsequently the confidence with which it has been asserted, and the credit given to it in Indian records and traditions, appear to be sufficient justification for the repetition of an accusation so grievous to a nation professing Christianity, boasting a civilization, and in friendly relations with this empire. However reluctant to reiterate it, the historian has a stern duty, and paramount to such considerations. In justice it is added that similar offences are alleged against other European adventurers in the Indian waters.

† Fifty thousand pardoes.



of morals, and with a resolution worthy of the Christian and creditable to the statesman, he determined to send missionaries thither. Dr. Francke, divinity professor of the University of Halle, in Saxony, was consulted, and he judiciously selected Zeigenbalg and Plutschau, names now immortalized. They landed on the coast of Coromandel, in July, 1706. Their reception was far from being encouraging. Their mission was treated as chimerical and impracticable. The results of their labours in the missionary field have been previously related, and the notice of them here is for the purpose of elucidating the effects they produced on the polity of those amongst whom they were destined to labour. It must be confessed that those who anticipated—and many did at the time—that the conversion of the natives would add so many loyal and useful subjects to the Danish government, that disciplined they would become better soldiers than any of their countrymen, that the acquisition of the numbers calculated upon would add both to the wealth and the strength of the Europeans, promote an improved agriculture, and the introduction of new manufactures have been disappointed. Contrary to the calculations then made, the trade of Denmark in the East has gradually declined, until Tranquebar itself was sold, in 1845, to the English crown. Nevertheless, it must be confessed the colonists improved, their villages as a consequence augmented, the people lived better, and the government of Tranquebar found itself more secure than it had been previously.

A proposal was made about this time to Frederick, which promised to accelerate his projected improvements in Asia, by Joseph Van Asperen, a shareholder in the Ostend Company, which had recently failed. His scheme seemed feasible, and held out great prospects. He represented to the king that there generally prevailed an active spirit of speculation, and that men's minds were naturally directed to the East Indies, a field which had yielded a rich harvest to preceding adventurers, which hitherto had been only partially explored; that the failure of the Ostend Company was entirely attributable to the disproportion of the means to the end, the causes such as could not attend that undertaking in any other country, least of all in Denmark, whose commercial pursuits had been uninterruptedly persevered in for more than a century; that all that was required was an adequate increasing capital, which could be easily raised by opening a new subscription upon favourable terms; that men of experience in the trade were not wanting, as naval and mercantile agents were to be had in sufficient

supply amongst those who had been just discharged from the service of the bankrupt company. Influenced by these plausible representations, the king was induced to sanction the proposal; and, to facilitate its adoption, the Danish East India Company was transferred from the city of Copenhagen to the borough of Altena, a place belonging to the crown of Denmark, and contiguous to the free city of Hamburg. This translation of the company, though seemingly well contrived, as will be seen, somewhat marred its success.

In order to draw support from speculators in other nations, his majesty granted a new charter, dated in April, 1728, for promoting the commerce of the said company to the Indies, China, and Bengal. The following summary of the contents of this charter may not be considered alien to the character of this history:—To the new subscribers was conceded an equal participation in the grants, octroys, and privileges secured to the said company by his majesty and his predecessor, and likewise in all the forts, settlements, revenues, houses, magazines, ships, and effects, and in short in all the possessions of the company and future acquisitions. The old shares which, as has been stated, numbered two hundred and fifty, of one thousand rix dollars each, were to remain as they were, with all the rights of the new shares, and the directors were bound to declare and affirm that the liabilities of the company did not exceed one hundred and sixty thousand rix dollars in specie. The united company was obligated to discharge those claims, upon condition that the old shares were entitled to no dividend till the year 1733; it was stipulated that if the debts exceeded that sum—of which no suspicion beyond this proviso appears to have been entertained—the old shares were answerable for the overplus, and the new shares protected from any demand to meet such a contingency. The value of each new share was settled at one thousand rix dollars in bank or specie, whereof twenty were to be paid upon account of Mr. Alexander Bruguier, banker, at Hamburg, or in the manner prescribed by the company at Copenhagen in 1727. All future calls in that year were not to exceed five per cent.; the call for the next year not to exceed twenty-five per cent.; the balance of the capital not to be called upon without the resolution of a general court of the company. If the entire sum of the said one thousand rix dollars for the new shares were not paid on or before the year 1738, the proprietors of the old shares were to have an interest at the rate of five per cent. allowed them for the sum they had paid over and above the new subscribers; every



subscriber was allowed to take shares for the bearer, signed by the company, and those who so preferred it, might have them inscribed in the company's books. There were to be paid for each transfer two rix dollars to the company, and half a rix dollar *to the poor*. The creditors of the company were allowed to take new shares for the sums due to them, provided they discounted on the said debts thirty per cent. for that year for each share, and twenty-five per cent. for the next year. The shares purchased under these conditions were entitled to the same dividends as the others. The said shares were released from liability of seizure, or stop upon any account whatsoever, as was declared in his majesty's octroy. The directors were to communicate yearly to the shareholders an account of the affairs of the company, and that account was to be taken as the data for appropriating the dividend to be specified in a general court of the company by the majority of voices. The directors were not allowed to undertake any trade or commerce in the East Indies upon the company's account without the consent of the members thereof, and still less were they allowed to dispose of or lend the company's money to any person whatever, for which they were to be answerable *in solido* in their own names and estates. They were to be bound by oath to the exact observance of this article, and for a faithful administration of the affairs of the company for the common benefit and advantage of the members thereof. All the merchandise sold in any place but Copenhagen was to be paid for in the bank of Hamburg to the account of one or more merchants and most substantial tradesmen, for the company's account. These merchants were to be chosen and appointed in a general court of the company by a majority of voices, and in no other way upon any pretence whatever. The said merchants or cashiers were to be paid money, but upon orders signed by three directors at least. The money paid the first year was to be placed at the disposal of the directors, till new ones to be added to them were chosen. The capital arising from the new subscriptions was to be laid out in sending ships to Tranquebar, Bengal, and China, and for no other use whatever. No more money was to be kept in cash than what would be deemed necessary for repairing, fitting and sending out ships, as in the preceding article. A general court of the company was to be summoned as soon as possible, in order to choose four new directors out of the new subscribers who might be all foreigners.

The first announcement of this association

was hailed with demonstrations of approval and confidence, and the Dutch, the countrymen and friends of the projector, Van Asperen, expressed a great inclination to embark in it; but this disposition was soon repressed. The support of a foreign undertaking was denounced in Holland as a high offence against the mother country; and the directors and shareholders generally of the East India Company did not fail, in their jealousy for their own interest, to denounce most vehemently the Dutch approvers of the scheme. In a short time after active means were employed to deter Van Asperen, and to nullify the impression he had so extensively made. This movement amongst his own countrymen prejudiced other countries likewise, and a check was given to those favourable demonstrations which shortly before had promised support, security, and success to the enterprise. The removal of the company from Copenhagen to Altena, which, in the beginning of the operations of the company, appeared to be a master-stroke of policy, was now used against it with great success. On the edifice erected for the accommodation of the directors and employés of the company, the following inscription had been placed in conspicuous characters:—"Here is the new India-house for carrying on the commerce of Tranquebar, China, and other places." Although intended merely to attract the attention of the public, it subjected the project to very grave suspicions. Its opponents insisted that this was avowedly a new company, to which the maritime powers had an unquestionable right to object; whereas the old company of Copenhagen was, even in their opinions, established in its legal right to that trade by prescription. Again it was argued that the East India Company at Altena was only an invention to revive the mysteries of stock-jobbing, and enable those who were in the secret to realize immense fortunes, under the colour of a trade with India, when in reality no such trade was seriously speculated on. It was further added that the royal concessions, in their character, were so very extensive and so highly disinterested, that it was extremely difficult to apprehend that an absolute prince such as was the King of Denmark, would, by the voluntary surrender of the liberties of his subjects, bind them any longer than till they could have answered the concealed purposes of this plausible proposal.\* Notwithstanding this serious and unexpected check, the project met with such success that the managers were encouraged to commence preparations for such an expedition as would be creditable

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii.; p. 51; Raynal's *History*, vol. xiii. p. 204—206.



to them. Several experienced adventurers hastened to Copenhagen, and proffered their experience and services, and all the country became soon acquainted with the character of the undertaking, and its great national importance. High expectations were entertained of its success, the popular feeling was enlisted in its favour; men of all grades promoted it with a patriotic zeal, feeling that whatever conduced to the public advantage, ramified to the benefit of every, even the most insignificant, individual in the commonwealth. In this state of public excitement it may be assumed that the utmost vigour was directed to the preparations. In this forward stage of progress, opposition to the company became a matter of state policy with foreign nations, and was prosecuted as such by the ministers of Great Britain and Holland at the court of Denmark. Lord Glenorchy and Mr. Dassenfeldt, the representatives of their respective courts, were instructed to act conjointly in this affair, and to exercise all their influence to procure the abrogation of the powers bestowed on the company. In obedience to these instructions, the following protest was drawn up and presented by them to the court of Denmark:—

“His majesty the King of Great Britain and their mightinesses the states-general of the United Provinces, foreseeing the injury the transferring of the East Company from Copenhagen to Altena will do to the commerce of their subjects, and perceiving with concern that almost at the same instant they are making so great efforts to stop the progress of the Ostend Company, the King of Denmark, their good old friend and ally, is setting up another, equally prejudicial to their subjects, have ordered the subscribing ministers to make most humble representations to his Danish Majesty, hoping from his majesty’s friendship that as soon as he shall be informed of an uneasiness this novelty gives them, he will withdraw the privileges lately granted to that company, and leave it on the ancient footing as always has subsisted at Copenhagen. Accordingly, the subscribing ministers desire your excellency to make a report thereof to the king, and to procure them a favourable answer. Done at Copenhagen, July 31, 1728.

“GLENORCHY AND DASSENFELDT.”

The courteous phraseology in which this extraordinary interference and demand were couched did not recommend the pill to the relish of his Danish majesty and his advisers. However, he deemed it advisable to reply, and he assured the maritime powers that “they had totally mistaken him in the matter, because it was never the intention to erect a new company, or to transfer that which had now existed above one hundred and ten years from Copenhagen to Altena; that this was manifest from the copy of the incorporation, which granted no new powers to the company, but barely confirmed the old ones; that the voyages proposed directly for China could

not be esteemed an infraction of treaties, not more than the voyages formerly made by the company’s ships from Tranquebar; that, further still, his majesty was not restrained, by any treaty whatever, from maintaining and supporting the commerce of his subjects to the Indies, either from their establishments in that part of the world, or from Copenhagen; that the law of nature and nations not only gave him a right, but made it his duty to promote the welfare of his subjects, and to extend their trade as far as was in his power; and, finally, that as he did not encourage this commerce with the view of injuring the East India Company in England or Holland, but purely with a design to benefit his own subjects, he could not discern how this should expose him to the resentment of any power whatever.” Whatever may be said in favour of the justice and cogency of these arguments, they did not satisfy the courts to which they were addressed. A protest was prepared to show the insufficiency of them, and the right which the maritime powers had to expect that his majesty should comply with their demands, and withdraw his protection from the company. This memorial was delivered by the Earl of Chesterfield and the deputies of the United Provinces to Mr. Greys, his Danish majesty’s minister at the Hague, in the summer of 1729, from which time it does not appear that any further applications were made on the subject.\*

Though the early progress of the company was retarded by this vigorous opposition, it eventually proved favourable to it. Frederick, now verging to the grave, and equally reluctant to be involved in fresh troubles, and unwilling to compromise the interests and rights of his subjects, withdrew his support from the Altena Company, but at the same time he recommended it to the patronage of his son, who shortly after succeeded him on the throne by the title of Christian VI. The withdrawal of the king had the salutary effect of weeding the company of all the speculators who were merely interested in the traffic in shares, and stimulated several to engage in an enterprise the promising nature of which was demonstrated by the powerful jealousy which it had provoked. The dreadful conflagration with which Copenhagen was visited and laid in ashes towards the end of Frederick’s reign retarded the operations of the company; but the revival of commercial confidence, and the liberal and well-directed encouragement of his suc-

\* See *Historical Register*; *Recueil Historique d’Actes, Négociations, Mémoires et Traités*. Par M. Rousset, tom. v. p. 35; *Universal History*, vol. xi.



cessor, shortly after gave it an impulse which was attended with felicitous results.

In a very short space of time order was restored; the East India house at Copenhagen, the dockyards, and magazines were put into repair, the direct commerce with China established, and so judiciously conducted that it continued steadily to increase for several years after, and the trade to Tranquebar was

better regulated, and yielded a more profitable return than it had done at any previous period.

The details connected with the after history of the Danish Company necessarily become involved in the history of the progress of the *British Empire in the East*, and shall receive such passing notice as may comport with their importance.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

THE MINOR EAST INDIA COMPANIES:—SWEDISH, PRUSSIAN, TRIESTE, AND SPANISH.

### THE SWEDISH COMPANY.

It was to the ruin of the Ostend Company that Sweden, as well as Denmark, owed the establishment in its dominions of an East India Company. Though a brave and hardy race, and celebrated in the earliest accounts we possess of the northern parts of the world, for the boldness of their ocean enterprises, the Swedes were among the last of the European nations to engage in maritime speculations. Their passion was war, and in its pursuit they left to the merchants of the Hanse Towns whatever little commerce their country supplied, and this was almost exclusively confined to the fisheries on their coasts.

The famous Gustavus Adolphus, while engaged in the war with Poland, entertained the design of opening a trade to the East for his subjects, and such as were desirous of co-operating with them, and for that purpose issued letters patent, dated at Stockholm, June 14, 1626; but the wars which shortly after broke out in Germany so engrossed his attention, that for the remainder of his life he had no opportunity of paying the attention it deserved to his enlightened and patriotic project.

In the reign of Christina, the learned daughter of Gustavus, though some of the Swedes had planted a colony in North America, none of them made any effort to share the wealth which abounded in eastern realms.

The desolation which the wars of Charles XII. inflicted on his country was not redeemed by the splendour of his barren victories. The little commerce that had previously struggled for existence, during his turbulent and ungenial rule was exhausted. Perhaps the only beneficial result of his adventurous reign was, that many of his subjects who had fled to foreign countries to escape the miseries war had inflicted, having gleaned knowledge and the fruits of their

industry, in the following reign—when Sweden began to recover—returned to enrich it, and every encouragement was held out to induce enterprising foreigners to visit Sweden and settle there. Encouraged by these favourable indications and other concomitant circumstances, one Mr. Henry Konig, an eminent merchant at Stockholm, proposed to form an East India Company. He submitted his scheme to the king and his ministers, and proved to their satisfaction that there were various parts of Asia and Africa with which a trade might be remuneratively established, without infringing on existing treaties, or impinging on the possessions or interests of other states. He argued that Sweden at all times was entitled to the common right of nations, of which in times past, had she thought it expedient, she might have availed herself; that never was offered so favourable an opportunity as the present. To ensure success, he argued that the assistance of skilled and wealthy foreigners should be enlisted—the former to conduct a commerce which the latter would essentially serve to initiate and to sustain. He assured them that he knew, from his own commercial acquaintance, that there were several capitalists who had withdrawn from the Ostend Company, anxiously on the look out for a profitable and safe investment, who, if judiciously encouraged, would lend their zealous and efficient co-operation.\* He succeeded in seriously impressing both the sovereign and his advisers with the assurance that there would be no great difficulty in finding both men and money in prosecuting this commerce with success; and in such a manner as to hazard no risk of loss by trade, or by opposition from other powers. All his statements having been carefully examined, it was resolved to authorise Konig

\* *Universal History*, vol. ii. p. 252; Macpherson's *Commercial Dictionary*.



to associate together as many as he could find willing to enter into the speculation, and, with the advice and consent of the senate, the king granted him a charter, dated June 14, 1731,\* precisely one hundred and five years after letters patent, for the like purpose, were signed by Gustavus. This charter has been pronounced to be one of the best digested instruments of its kind extant. A summary at least of it here is essential to the comprehension of what remains to be said upon the subject:—The king hereby concedes to Henry König and his associates the liberty of navigating and trading to the East Indies for fifteen years, and with the inhabitants of all countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, with the Island of Japan, wherever they shall think proper or convenient, with this single restriction—that they shall not trade in any port belonging to any prince or state in Europe without free leave first had and obtained. The ships engaged in this traffic shall constantly take in their lading at Gottenburg, to which port they shall return with all the merchandise they shall bring with them from the East Indies, and cause the same to be publicly sold as soon as they can. The said Henry König shall pay to the King of Sweden, during the said fifteen years, one hundred thalers for every *last* employed in their trade, within six months after the return of each ship. The company's ships must be built in Sweden, and be rigged and equipped with Swedish materials; and no foreign ships or materials must be employed, unless it be found impracticable to procure such in Sweden. The ships may be armed as the company think proper, and carry the Swedish flag. The company may make their capital any sum they think proper. They may export silver, bullion of all kinds, except Swedish coins; and they may import all kinds of merchandise from India. Their seamen and soldiers are exempted from being pressed into the king's service; these ships are never to be hindered from sailing, under any pretence whatever; their commanders are invested with the same power of maintaining discipline on board ship which the commanders of the king's ships possess; and they are authorised to oppose, by force of arms, all pirates and others who may attempt to molest them in any part of the world. The goods imported by the company are exempted from paying duties, except a very trifling acknowledgment upon removing them. The company's business is to be conducted by three directors, who must all be Protestants, native or naturalized subjects of Sweden, and residing in

\* *Supplément au Corps*, tom. ii. p. 2, and p. 305; Poslethwaite's *Commercial Dictionary*.

the kingdom, and Henry König is named the first of them. If any director betrays his trust, or acts in any respect improperly, the proprietors may apply to the college of commerce, who are empowered to suspend him, in which case the proprietors are to elect another in his stead. All foreigners who are proprietors of the company's stock, or are employed in their service, shall be naturalized on making application to the king; and their property shall be, on no account, liable to arrest. All other subjects of Sweden are forbidden from trading within the company's limits, on pain of forfeiting their vessels and cargoes. The king promises to renew, alter, or enlarge the company's privileges, if it shall be found necessary for promoting the prosperity of their trade.

The reason why the charter was of such limited duration—fifteen years—is, that it was thought it would be the best expedient either to afford an earlier opportunity of rectifying any imperfections incident to new undertakings, or to satisfy, in some degree, the denouncers of the scheme, many of whom strenuously opposed it.\* Being restricted from interfering with the settlements of other nations, the company was guarded against any reasonable grounds of complaint, or even jealousies on the part of any of them, and the effects of this precaution were seen in the very first stage of proceedings. Their preparations were made without remonstrance or molestation. Two large ships were built and soon got ready for sea, furnished and armed in the most efficient manner. Men were scrupulously selected for supercargoes. Their abilities, moral worth, and intimate acquaintance with the duties of their office were the qualifications. The officers and sailors were selected with similar discretion. In fact, everything was regulated with judgment and caution, and in two years after the charter was granted, the *Frederick* and *Ulrica*, so named from the king and queen, put out from the harbour of Gottenburg, to encounter the perils of the ocean in search of the productions of Indian climes.

The king had officially notified to the states-general the establishment of the company, adding, at the same time, his earnest resolve to rigidly enforce the restrictions which forbade their interference with the trade of other European nations, and an assurance was given that he would pay readymoney for whatever refreshments or repairs might be wanted in the ports of any of his allies. He expressed his hopes that those moderate demands would be readily granted. He had to make a second application to elicit a reply, which was indeed

\* Raynal, vol. iii. p. 40.



a very qualified one. Their mightinesses said that though they could not be expected to favour the new company, they would give every necessary succour to his majesty's subjects. As further evidence of the interest with which the king watched the development of the company, and to mark their appearance in China with a special token of his royal favour, he invested Mr. Colin Campbell, the supercargo of the *Frederick*, with the character of his ambassador to the Emperor of China and some other oriental princes.

At the starting of the company their stock varied from one voyage to another. It was said to have amounted to a quarter of a million of our money in 1753, and about two hundred thousand only at the last convention. However, there were no data accessible to the public by which they could accurately estimate it, for the accounts were never publicly exposed. The Swedes had in the first stages much less interest in the stock than they subsequently acquired, and in consequence of this the government deemed it politic to throw some mystery about it. With this object it was enacted that any director who should divulge the name of a proprietor, or the sum he had subscribed, should be suspended or even removed, and forfeit all the money which he had invested in the speculation. This policy of concealment, which seems so inconceivable in a free country, was persevered in for thirty-five years. It was, however, provided that twelve of the proprietors should investigate the accounts of the directors once in four years, but the auditors were nominated by themselves; and in England it is known by unpleasant experience what little security such provision yields. In subsequent years the power of appointments was conveyed to the proprietors, and, as a matter of course, with the beneficial effects that usually attend honest inquiry and unrestricted publicity. As Raynal tersely observes,\* "Secrecy in politics is like lying; it may preserve a state for the moment, but must certainly ruin it in the end. Both are only serviceable to evil-minded persons."

The first vessels sent out were well received by the Chinese, and permission was granted to them to establish a factory at Canton, on the same terms as were enjoyed by the other European powers having establishments in that city.

At the time when the arrival of the ships was eagerly expected in Sweden, a letter was received from Mr. Campbell, conveying the dis-

agreeable intelligence that on the return of the *Frederick*, as she was at the entrance of the Straits of Sunda, she was fired upon by seven Dutch vessels, captured, and led into Batavia. The Dutch commodore alleged that he was acting under the orders of his government, and would have captured the vessel even if the King of Sweden were aboard. On complaint being made by the Swedish minister to the states-general, they, and also the directors of the Dutch East India Company, protested that they had never issued such orders. The ship was soon liberated, and an insult to the Swedish flag was never after offered by the ships of the Dutch company. The *Ulrica* reached Gottenburg without any accident, and the voyage proved moderately profitable. This good commencement spirited on the directors to renewed exertions, and to hope that succeeding expeditions would prove still more satisfactory.\* They were not disappointed. The way in which the servants of the company conducted themselves won for them the esteem and favour of the native authorities, and inhabitants generally, of Canton; and they showed themselves disposed to favour them in every possible way. Their trade, notwithstanding the loss of some of their vessels, proved exceedingly remunerative to the shareholders and the nation at large, for by it they were enabled to export a considerable quantity of Swedish merchandise, and but a very inconsiderable portion of their oriental importations was consumed in the country. The money obtained from foreigners for what they exported far exceeded the amount of bullion transmitted to the Indian markets. Thus the exchange was greatly in favour of Sweden, and the inevitable result of such a state of things was soon made visible by the increase of the precious metals, and the improved habits, social comforts, and increasing demand for labour.

At home the company met with some impediments. They were obliged to take foreigners principally into their service, and there being no nation in Europe more jealous than the Swedes, this generated a great deal of discontent. The populace murmured that the bread was being taken out of their mouths. These complaints were as unjust as they were illiberal; those whom they directed their wrath against were spending their earnings, as a matter of course, amongst them; and those against whom a plausible charge could be brought—the non-resident shareholders—were overlooked and escaped the popular indignation. To subdue this irrational ferment, an order was published an-

\* Le secret dans la politique est comme le mensonge : il sauve pour un moment les états, et les perd à la longue. L'un et l'autre n'est utile qu'aux méchants.—*Hist. Philos. et Polit.* tom. iii. p. 215. Imprimé à La Haye, 1774.

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*.



nouncing that at least two-thirds of the seamen on board their ships should be native Swedes. As this order could not be executed in consequence of the paucity of native mariners, the common people, who were the great bulk of the malcontents, quickly discovered the silliness of their clamour, and were at length convinced that the company had done no more than what circumstances justified and their charter privileged, and that no undue partiality existed for the foreigners.

In the year 1746 the company's charter was renewed, and the term of their exclusive trade prolonged to the year 1766.

From the first establishment of the Swedish company, every partner was at liberty to withdraw his capital upon the termination of the particular voyage for which it was invested, and hence arose the fluctuations already noticed. Experiencing the injurious effects of this precarious state of their stock, it was agreed, in the year 1753, that from that time forward it should be fixed and permanent, and that any proprietor wishing to withdraw should, as in other joint-stock companies in Europe, find a purchaser. At the same time the king, to enable the company to maintain its position against the rivalry of the Prussian trade recently established at Embden, agreed to a commutation duty of twenty per cent. upon the value of the East India goods consumed within the kingdom, instead of the lastage duty, hitherto paid by every ship for each voyage. But in the year 1765, when the charter was nearly expired, the government not only resumed the lastage duty, but also demanded the arrears alleged to be due since 1753. This was not the only attempt made by the government to obtain a participation in the profits. A renewal of the charter was granted in 1766 for a term of twenty years, and as a consideration for this favour the company were obliged to lend to the state above one hundred thousand pounds sterling, at six per cent. interest. As a security for this, they were allowed to retain in their hands the duty payable upon every ship, till the whole of that debt was liquidated.

The chief trade was with China, and the commerce of that vast kingdom and those to the east of it, being looked upon by the other European nations as merely incidental to their Indian trade, was the cause why the Swedes were permitted to pursue it without interruption and jealousy. Four-fifths of imports were teas, the consumption of which was very small indeed in Sweden, owing to the check it received by the imposition of a tax of not less than twenty-five per cent. All the rest of their imports were exported on paying to the state eight per cent. on the

produce of the sales. By far the largest quantity of teas thus sold fell into the hands of foreigners—and realized ready money—chiefly for the purpose of being smuggled into Great Britain. This clandestine trade was carried on with very great success for years, till it received its death-blow in the year 1784 by the passing of an act for lowering the duties on teas. The produce of these public sales was variable, of course influenced by the number and tonnage of the vessels engaged in it, and by the demand. Raynal says it may be affirmed that it has scarcely ever fallen below two millions of livres,\* and has never risen higher than five millions.†

#### THE PRUSSIANS IN INDIA.

The name of Frederick the Great of Prussia will live—with his faults and his virtues—in the grateful remembrance of a people, it may be said peoples, whom he raised from a state of depression to be a kingdom, great in its victories, great in its intellectual progress, great in the councils of the greatest nations, and great in its alliances, political and matrimonial.

Having enlarged and secured his dominion, he was deliberating on the best means of enriching it, when a fortunate event put him in possession of East Friesland, in 1744. This province contains the city and port of Embden, the only one he possessed in his dominions, and this he proposed to make the seat of a flourishing trade with India. Embden is the capital of the little province of East Friesland. It is a considerable seaport, now belonging to Prussia, situated on the river Ems, or Embs, at its influx into the North Sea, at the Bay of Dollart. About three centuries ago it was reckoned one of the best ports in Europe. The English, compelled to abandon Antwerp, had made it the centre of their relations with the continent. The Dutch had for a long time endeavoured to appropriate it, but in vain. At length it excited their jealousy to such a degree, that they attempted to fill up the port. It commands all the essentials to entitle it to be the emporium of a great trade. The only inconvenience it seemed to labour under as the seat of Prussian commerce was its distance from the bulk of the Prussian dominions, and the delay which would be incurred in succouring it in an emergency; but Frederick was of opinion that the terror of his name would be its protection, and in this persuasion he established there the East India Company.

To further his views, he decided on the incorporation of an East India Company, and for the accomplishment of this he held out

\* £83,333 6s. 8d.

† £20,333 6s. 8d.



hopes of encouragement to foreigners. The expectation of royal patronage, particularly from a prince of his great reputation, speedily brought around him several ready to co-operate with him in the maturing of his project. These were mostly composed of Englishmen, Dutchmen, and Frenchmen, who set at defiance the restrictions which their respective governments had framed to prevent their subjects from joining any such alien speculations.

The new Prussian company was incorporated under the title of the Asiatic or China Company, on the 11th of September, 1750, for the term of fifty years. The charter states that during that period they were privileged to send two ships every year to China. All goods imported by them, and sold to foreigners, might be exported without being subject to dues; and the company might export any article manufactured in the king's dominions without paying any duty. Foreigners subscribing to the company's capital acquired all the privileges of Prussian subjects. Noblemen might subscribe without derogating from their dignity. All countries to be conquered by them were to be their own property. They were also invested with the privilege of carrying on several manufactures, and the herring, cod, and whale fisheries, and to trade in all places where their vessels could have free access, &c.

In the course of four or five years the company dispatched six ships to China; but it is asserted—and there are very strong grounds for adopting the statement—that very inefficient, if not improper agents, were entrusted with the management, for of all the European adventures in those days of profit and plunder in the East the Prussian company alone were unfortunate. On winding up their accounts, when the war put an end to their commerce, in 1756, they discovered that their profits amounted to one-half per cent. in the year.

On the 1st of January, 1753, the king established a second company, also at Embden, for trading to Bengal, and the countries adjacent thereto, during the space of twenty years, and with permission to send as many vessels as they pleased. The usual privileges of joint-stock companies were granted to them, including the power to make their own laws, to choose their directors, subject, however, to his majesty's approval.

The capital was limited to one million Brandenburg crowns, in shares of five hundred crowns each. The formation of the original company could not be completed; and some other persons, with the king's permission, obtained the charter, and opened

subscriptions at Embden, Breslau, Königsberg, Magdeburg, Antwerp, and Hamburg. They proposed to send one or two ships on experimental trips to Bengal as soon as the funds subscribed would admit.

After several delays a ship was dispatched to Bengal, and a factory established there. It was cast away in the Ganges in the year 1756. In the year 1761 the second was sent out by the company to look for the remains of the first. This was not attended with success; no profits were realized, and all hopes of establishing a trade with that part of India abandoned. The Asiatic or China Company, however, continued to carry on some kind of trade with China till Embden itself reverted to the possession of Hanover, when Prussia ceased to have any interest in it.

#### THE IMPERIAL COMPANY OF TRIESTE.

This company owes its existence to one William Bolts,\* an Englishman, who, having served in India, and being dismissed the service of the English East India Company, transferred his allegiance to Maria Theresa, the Empress of Austria, and was received by her as one of her subjects. In testimony of his gratitude, he laid before her a proposal for establishing a trade with Africa and the East Indies, and to make one of her ports at the head of the Adriatic the seat of it, and thus obviate any objection, on the score of treaties, which might be started against such an establishment in the Netherlands. To enable him to carry his project into effect, he solicited the empress to let him have an assortment of metals, cannon, and small arms, from the imperial mines and manufactories, to the amount of one hundred and eighty thousand florins, and to allow him two years for the payment.†

The scheme was received with royal favour, and a charter conceded, dated the 5th of June, 1775, whereby he was authorized, during the space of ten years, to carry on a trade, with vessels under the imperial flag, from the Austrian ports in the Adriatic to Persia, India, China, and Africa; to transport negro slaves from Africa to America; to take goods upon freight either for the imperial ports or any others for account of foreigners whose properties shall not be liable to confiscation, even if they should belong to nations

\* Mr. Bolts arrived in Bengal in the year 1760; he resigned his appointment in the company's service in 1766. Finding that he proposed remaining in India in defiance of their regulations, they were obliged to make use of the powers vested in them by parliament to send him home.

† This was condoned by the empress's successor.



at war with her; to take possession in the queen's name of any territories which he might obtain from the princes of India: and the charter declared that the vessels belonging to him should be exempted from arrest or detention at all times, whether of peace or war; and that he should be provided with necessary passports, and care taken to obtain redress for him if attacked or molested.

Bolts took into partnership Charles Proli and Company, of Antwerp, merchants, to the extent of one-third of the business. It was agreed that two ships were to be got ready, loaded at Leghorn and Trieste, and that Bolts was to accompany them, for the purpose of establishing factories and commercial relations in India, leaving the charter in the hands of his partners, who were to open a house of India trade in Trieste. Bolts proceeded to London, and there bought a ship. When he got to sea he superseded the English captain, hoisted the imperial colours, and sailed into Lisbon. There his crew was seized upon, and carried off by an English frigate. Nothing daunted, he soon collected another, composed of Italians, arrived in Leghorn, and thence steered for India. Having founded three factories on the coast of Malabar, one on the Nicobar Island, and one at Delagoa, on the coast of Africa, he returned with three ships to Leghorn, in May, 1781.

The success of this adventure so pleased the Grand-duke of Tuscany, that he granted a charter to Bolts, which secured to him the exclusive trade between Tuscany and all the islands beyond the Cape Verde Islands, to be conducted with two ships under Tuscan colours.

So far successful, and favoured by two princes, his fortune seemed to be guaranteed; but such was not the case. On the contrary, he found himself much embarrassed. This, as he represents the matter, was entirely owing to the want of faith on the side of his partners. Whoever was to blame, as soon as his creditors heard of his success, they crowded to Leghorn, and seized on his three ships and cargoes. To release himself from this position, he was obliged to involve himself still further with the firm, and ceded to M. Proli and Company the imperial charter, and also the Tuscan charter, in order to raise a joint-stock of two million florins; he further renounced any right he might have in the profits made by the ships they had sent to China, except a commission of two per cent. upon the gross sales of the cargoes; and he took upon himself the liabilities of a ship called the *Grand-duke of Tuscany*, with her cargo, which had been seized at the Cape of Good Hope by the French and Dutch in 1781,

and also of another vessel expected from Malabar. For these advantageous concessions the firm, "in friendship," lent him £6280 16s. 8d., at five per cent. interest, to pay off a debt contracted on the joint account, and agreed that he should be at liberty to send two ships to India or China on his own sole account, only paying to them a rate of commission of six per cent. on the gross amount of the cargoes in Europe. This agreement was confirmed by Joseph II., who also authorized them to raise the sum of two millions of florins, the proposed amount of the capital of the new IMPERIAL COMPANY OF TRIESTE FOR THE COMMERCE OF ASIA.

Proli and Company immediately opened subscriptions to raise this capital. The existing stock they valued at one million of florins, and for the remaining million they offered shares at one thousand florins each. They declared themselves directors at Antwerp, and Bolts, and another not yet elected, directors at Trieste.

At a meeting of the partners—the only one ever held—in September, 1781, it was proposed to send out six ships for China and India, two for the east coast of Africa, and three for the Northern Whale Fishery, and Proli and Co. engaged to procure the money, and were authorized to do so.

In November, 1786, Bolts, on his own account, fitted out a large vessel for the northwest coast of America, to take advantages of the fur trade, there newly opened, and to convey the cargo to China. He proposed that the ship should pass round Cape Horn, and after loading at Nootka, and selling the furs in China, return to Europe by the Cape of Good Hope, and thus have the honour of accomplishing the first Austrian circumnavigation of the world. The measures which he adopted promised an assurance of success.

To superintend the voyage Bolts had engaged four officers, the companions of Cook in his perilous wanderings; five naturalists were also engaged to extend the demesne of science; and a Bermudian sloop was purchased to serve as a tender, but these preparations were all frustrated, as Bolts asserts, by the malicious intrigues of his brother directors, whereby he sustained an enormous loss, and was obliged to engage the ship in another way.

The other directors were not inactive in April, 1782. They boasted they had six million florins at command, and six ships under the Austrian flag in active service; but their ardour was somewhat moderated by the intelligence which about this time reached them, that their factory at Delagoa had been destroyed by the Portuguese, who claimed a right to that territory. Five of the company's



vessels arrived from China at Ostend in 1784, which had been made a free port by the emperor on his visit there in 1781. But the fortunate arrival of so many ships, with nearly three millions and a half pounds of tea, besides other goods, was counterbalanced by the loss of the *Imperial Eagle*, which was arrested by the creditors, and involved the loss of three hundred thousand florins. This disheartened several of the shareholders, and induced them to withdraw. Their stock was sold at thirty-five per cent. below par, and afterwards the holders were more unfortunate still, for in the year following the company was declared bankrupt to the amount of ten million florins.

This company encountered no opposition from the jealousy of the other nations of Europe with the exception of the petty kingdom of Portugal; and, in all human probability, its success had been brilliant, were it not for the jealousy and differences of Bolts and the co-partners.

#### THE SPANIARDS IN INDIA.

The latest of the nations in Europe which established commercial intercourse with India was Spain, though the Spaniards were the first after the Portuguese who crossed the Pacific and navigated the Indian Ocean.

In the fifteenth century, while the Portuguese were energetically prosecuting their discoveries, extending their trade, and establishing their power in the East, their neighbours, the Spaniards, were, with equal activity and success, securing boundless treasures in the West,\* Columbus having added the newly discovered western continent to its dominions. There was no state to dispute the sovereignty of the vast extent of sea and land to which they claimed a right, nor did either power then apprehend that—by the giant strength of the sluggish denizens of the swamps of the Lowlands or the isolated inhabitants of the isles of the West—those splendid demesnes would be rudely torn from their grasp; and confidently they calculated when the sovereign pontiff, in the plenitude of his assumed temporal dictatorship, had decided that a meridian drawn from the north to the south, three hundred and seventy leagues westward of Cape de Verde, should bound the mutual possessions and right of maritime discovery of the two kingdoms,† that no son of mother church would impiously dispute so venerable an adjustment.

Several years elapsed after the discovery

\* Raynal's *Histoire des Etablissements dans les Indes*, tom. ii. p. 236.

† Dunham's *History of Spain and Portugal*, vol. ii. p. 280.

by Columbus of America, before an attempt was made to explore the ocean—which it was conjectured extended far away to the west of it. Vasco Nunez de Balboa, a Spanish adventurer, guided by some Indians, was the first European who was gratified by beholding its broad expanse. This occurred in 1513. The court of Spain, in 1515, dispatched Juan Diaz de Solis, who had previously sailed along the coast of Brazil, to attempt a passage to the South Sea and to India along the southern shore, part of the recently discovered continent.\* This expedition proved disastrous: in an encounter with the Indians on the banks of the Rio de la Plata many of his followers were slain, and the survivors returned to Spain.

A second attempt was made to reach India from a Spanish settlement on the southern coast of Mexico. Vessels were fitted out for the voyage; but unfortunately the timber made use of in their construction was so subject to be wormeaten, that in a few weeks they ceased to be seaworthy, and thus terminated these preparations.

It was reserved for Fernando de Magalhaens (Magellan) to attempt this with success. Notwithstanding the recent arbitration of the pope, the line of demarcation was not so definitely drawn as to obviate the origin of disputes. The splendid empire secured in Asia to Manuel of Portugal excited the jealousy of his brother Fernando, King of Castile, and he made several fruitless attempts to be allowed to participate in its advantages. After the death of that prince a disaffected Portuguese, who had served Manuel with distinction both in Ethiopia and India, and complained—perhaps not without cause—that royalty's rewards were not commensurate with the perils encountered and the results realized, fled to the court of Castile, and there succeeded, perhaps with little effort, in impressing on the new king, Charles V. of Austria, that, by the division made with the papal line, the Molucca Islands geographically belonged to Spain. To these he also proposed a shorter route than that by the Cape of Good Hope—namely, by the Brazils. In August, 1519, he set out with five ships, with absolute power over the crews. Steering towards the Canaries, he doubled the Cape de Verde, passed the islands of that name, and boldly steered into the limitless waste of the Western Ocean. He coasted along the shores of Brazil, daunted by no dangers of unknown waters, warring elements, mutinous crews, or fierce gigantic Patagonians, whose naturally large physical

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce in the East*, p. 319.



proportions were extravagantly exaggerated by the nervous fears of his apprehensive followers. He passed the *land of giants*; and in September, 1520, arrived at a cape which he called after the eleven thousand virgins, and then entered the fearful straits which immortalise his name and his toils. Passing through a series of perils of more than romantic interest, he at length reached the Philippine Islands, after a passage of fifteen hundred leagues. Here he lost his valuable life in a conflict between two native chiefs, the quarrel of one of whom he was imprudently induced to espouse. Only one—the *Victoria*—of his six vessels returned to Spain; she arrived there in September, 1522,\* bringing home a cargo of spices taken in at the Molucca Islands, and with only eighteen men, survivors of the battles and voyages, who, having returned by the Cape of Good Hope, had the honour of being the first circumnavigators of the globe. Had Magalhaens returned, he was to have a patent for exclusive trading, for the period of ten years, with the countries which he should have discovered. "If," says Dunham,—and he is perfectly justified in making the observation,—“the object of the expedition failed through the catastrophe of its leader, he will be considered by posterity as by far the most undaunted, and in many respects the most extraordinary man, that ever traversed an unknown sea.”

The Portuguese were startled by the discovery of this new route to Asia, the claims laid to the Moluccas, and the endless pretensions which, by possibility, might arise out of them; but Charles, who was now not only King of Spain and sovereign of the seventeen rich provinces of the Netherlands, but also Emperor of Germany, was too powerful to be influenced by threats or aggressions. Three hundred and fifty thousand ducats of gold were paid to Spain in consideration of its desisting from further trading in those oriental regions; however, the right was reserved of resuming that trade on the repayment of the money advanced. The bargain was concluded by a treaty executed at Saragossa on the 22nd of April, 1529.

By this treaty the commerce of the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, was secured to Portugal as long as it continued independent of Spain. On the union of these kingdoms some time after, the Portuguese settlements, as dependencies on Spain, were exposed to the hostilities of the English and Dutch, who were engaged in war against the latter power. The Portuguese, however, were expelled from

the Moluccas at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Several subsequent efforts were made to find out a shorter route than by the Straits of Magellan, but without success. The Spaniards were, therefore, confined to carrying on the trade with the Spice Islands from their lately established settlements on the western shores of America. The commodities of the East and West were transported by land carriage across the narrow Isthmus of Panama.

In 1564 the Philippine Islands were brought under the dominion of Spain by Miguel Lopez de Legaspi. In the island of Zebu he founded a town called San Miguel; and in the island of Leuconia he erected Manilla, destined to become the capital of the Spanish dominions in the Eastern seas, and was greatly enriched by the commerce with America, China, and other rich countries and islands. It is called by the Spaniards the pearl of the East.

The branch of commerce which is most cultivated at Manilla is with Acapulco, in Mexico. Thither ships are sent annually, called galleons. The origin of this trade is rather curious, and is sufficiently important to justify a passing notice. It is thus told by Macpherson:—"The missionaries whom Philip II., in his zeal for the propagation of the Catholic religion, had sent to convert the natives of the Philippine Islands, represented to him that they could not perform the sacrifice of the mass for want of flour and wine, and they proposed and requested that those necessary articles should be brought to them from Acapulco, the nearest Spanish port on the continent of America. The king, notwithstanding a strenuous opposition made by the council of the Indies, acceded to the proposal of the missionaries, and licensed the viceroy of Mexico to send every year a vessel to Manilla loaded with flour and wine, and gave strict orders that no other merchandise whatever should be carried to or from Manilla. After the importation of the flour and wine had gone on for some years in strict observance of the royal mandate, the viceroys of Mexico and Manilla agreed among themselves that the annual vessel, instead of returning quite empty to Acapulco, should carry a parcel of Chinese and Indian silks and cotton piece goods to be sold for their joint account. When the energy of the Spanish government declined, the vigilance of the council of India relaxed, or perhaps their complaisance to the viceroys increased; in consequence of this, the trade of carrying oriental merchandise to Acapulco was pursued to such an extent as to require two ships of from fifteen to eighteen hundred tons burthen, which arrived annually at Acapulco, heavily

\* Dunham's *History of Spain and Portugal*, vol. iii. p. 312.



freighted with rich stuffs of every kind, and also linens made in China, in imitation of the French fabrics; diamonds, pearls, spiceries, drugs, tea, porcelain, &c., sufficient for the consumption of the great province of Mexico. The returns consisted of cochineal, confections, mercery goods, some European trinkets, and the original articles, flour and wine; but the chief part of the return cargo was uniformly silver, to the amount of five or six million dollars. This trade, begun by the two viceroys for their own emolument, appears, upon the subsequent augmentation of it, to have been shared by the inhabitants, and became very prejudicial to the trade between Spain and Mexico by supplying the colonists with an innumerable variety of articles of Indian and Chinese manufacture, which, by their superior cheapness, and most of them also by their superior beauty, rendered the rival European fabrics in a great measure unsaleable, and very much impaired the king's revenue—not only by the deficiency of the duty upon merchandise exported from the kingdom, but also by depriving him of his share of the silver, which would be imported into Spain if not diverted to Manilla, whence it was carried to India and China.”\*

In consequence of this state of things, it was often a subject of serious consideration to Spanish governments whether it would not be to the interest of the mother country to abandon the Philippine Islands.

To this predisposition is to be attributed the policy adopted by the Spanish monarchy in 1720, which, reluctant to relinquish the sovereignty of so many islands, yielded to the remonstrance of the council and the persevering clamours of the merchants, and imposed a strict prohibition of the use of Chinese and Indian manufactures. This arbitrary measure produced great dissatisfaction; and after a long controversy the colonists at length succeeded in procuring its reversal in the year 1734.

Up to this date there was no direct trade with India, if we overlook the interval from 1580 to 1640, during which Portugal was a portion of the Spanish dominions. Indeed, a direct trade was forbidden by the treaty of Munster, concluded in the year 1648, whereby it was agreed between the King of Spain and the states-general that neither of them should use the East India trade in any other manner than was then practised—that is to say, that the Dutch should only sail by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Spaniards only from their settlements in America. Spain faithfully abided by this arrangement, and never

made an attempt to infringe upon it till the year 1733, when a royal charter was granted to Don Emanuel de Arriaga and his associates, under the name of THE ROYAL COMPANY OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, vesting in them during a period of twenty years the exclusive privilege of sailing to both sides of Africa, and to all the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope. They were empowered to carry the royal colours upon their ships, which were exempted from all duties, in the same manner as if they actually belonged to the royal navy, their officers also being on a footing of equality with those of that service. They were allowed to export bullion without paying any duty. The company were to pay at Cadiz a duty of eight per cent. on spices, and five per cent. on all other descriptions of goods imported by them. The capital was fixed at four thousand shares of one thousand dollars each, to be subscribed at Cadiz. The business of the company was confined to nine directors, appointed by the king, each of them possessing twenty-five shares in the company. The king subscribed for four hundred shares, constituting a tenth of the capital.

It has been alleged that there never existed a *bonâ fide* intention of engaging in commerce, but that that company was concocted for mere stock-jobbing projects. There is no evidence to sustain this condemnatory accusation. It is far more probable that its progress was stopped by the failure of the galleons and the intrigues of the Chinese merchants in the Philippines.

Another interval of thirty years elapsed without an effort, but in the end of the year 1764, the *Buen Consejo*, a king's ship sailed from Cadiz, and passing the forbidden Cape,\* arrived at Manilla, and returned in 1766, with a cargo of eastern produce. Thirteen more voyages followed in the same route, the last of which was completed in 1784.

At this time the charter of the royal Guispucoan Company of Caraccas expired, and it was deemed a favourable opportunity, with the aid of their disengaged capital, of establishing a company which would embrace the commerce of both continents. The scheme was sanctioned by the king, and a very liberal charter granted, dated March 10, 1785, consisting of one hundred articles, of which the following are the most important:—“THE ROYAL COMPANY OF THE PHILIPPINES is established for twenty-five years.—The capital is to consist of eight millions of ‘pesos sencillos’† divided into thirty-two thousand shares of two hundred and fifty pesos each, to which all persons, of whatever description, not excepting

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 321.

\* Macpherson, p. 324.

† A *peso sencillo*, 3s. 4½d.



ecclesiastics, either individually or corporately may be admitted to subscribe.—The king subscribes a million of dollars for himself and his sons, besides his stock in the Caraccas Company, and he hopes that the National Bank of San Carlos, and the other bank in Spain and the Havannas, will show their zeal for the prosperity of the nation, and the advancement of its commerce, by subscribing largely.—The Caraccas Company shall be incorporated into the Philippine Company, and all their stock be brought into the capital at a fair valuation.—The prosperity of the Philippine Islands being one of the principal motives which induced the king, in his paternal love for his subjects; to establish the company, three thousand shares shall be reserved for the inhabitants of those islands of every description, whether Spaniards or Indians, whether individuals or communities, to subscribe for them at any time within two years after the publication of the company's charter within the islands.—The shares may be transferred by indorsements, as is practised in those of the National Bank, and at such prices as the parties may agree for." The company were prohibited from raising money upon interest; but if a greater capital were required, they, with the king's permission, might raise an additional sum by a subscription among themselves. A statement of the company's affairs was ordered to be published for the information of all concerned, and copies to be forwarded to the agents in the Indies and the Philippines. During the term of the charter no Spanish vessel, except of the royal navy or of the company, had permission to go to the Philippine Islands or to India, and no ships but those of the company were privileged to sail direct from Spain to the ports of South America, the Philippines, or India. The company's ships might trade to the other Spanish dominions in America, as other Spanish subjects did, without any exclusive privilege. The company might carry silver or merchandise to the ports of Asia, paying two per cent. on foreign goods, and nothing on Spanish goods or money. They might ship every kind of oriental goods, not excepting piece goods of silk and cotton of every description, at the port of Manilla for Spain, without paying any duty. On

their arrival in Spain, they should pay four per cent. rated on the current prices, and a drawback of three and a half per cent. was allowed on re-exportation. The laws formerly promulgated for prohibiting the admission of muslins and other cotton goods were repealed with respect to those imported by the company. For the encouragement of the Philippines, their products were exempted from duty, when borne directly to Spain. The business was to be conducted by a junta of government, or direction authorised by the king, and consisting of three directors chosen by the king, three by the company, two by the National Bank, two by the Bank "de los Gremios" two by the Bank of Havanna, and one by the Bank of Seville (if those bodies should hold a sufficient amount of stock), and also two stockholders. The king's secretary was empowered to summon a meeting of the junta when he saw fit, and to act as president.

The project was far from being approved of by the people of Manilla. They did all in their power to injure and bring it into discredit. The discouraging reception which they experienced, however, did not daunt the agents who arrived. They applied themselves to direct the industry of the aborigines to the cultivation of indigo, cotton, pepper, and silk, which they intended to make the staples of the trade of the Philippines.

In 1789 permission was extended to all European vessels to import into Manilla every kind of Asiatic goods, but by no means European, and to receive in return the merchandise of Spain, Spanish America, and the Philippines, and any foreign merchandise imported by the company. This permission was to extend to three years.

With royal favour, large contributions by the king, the extensive privileges conceded, and its wide range of commercial operations, this company did nothing worthy of its inauguration. It is true, commerce was very much deranged by the war which was occasioned by the memorable French revolution; but it must be said to their credit, that with the proceeds of the few cargoes which arrived, and the sale of their stored merchandise, they paid off the money they had borrowed, and some dividends of from five to seven per cent.



## CHAPTER LIX.

FRENCH ENTERPRISE IN INDIA AND THE EAST, TO THE TIME OF THE FORMATION OF  
"THE PERPETUAL COMPANY OF THE INDIES."

OF all the European nations attracted to the East, there is not one whose history is so interwoven with that of the English in their Asiatic transactions as our gallant neighbours the French. In Europe the two nations have been always rivals, and, with very brief intervals, belligerents. There were many interests purely Asiatic, which aggravated the causes of quarrel, involved hostilities at home, and embittered national antipathies. The dire consequences of these rivalries are to be read in the jealousies, intrigues, and fierce, and for some time dubious, conflicts that were maintained for supremacy in India. The narration of these will necessarily form an interesting and considerable portion of this work. It is not consistent with the plan proposed to do more in this chapter than to epitomise the history of the pertinent events which attended the arrival of the French in India, and briefly to trace their progress, until they are placed face to face with their great, persistent, and victorious opponents, whence the records of their deeds commingle.

Though the French were amongst the latest of the European maritime powers to avail themselves of the immense field of wealth thrown open by the discovery of the ocean passage to India, it is a singular fact, not generally known, that they were nearly as early in their discoveries as any nation of the West. In the reign of Louis XII., and in the month of July, 1503, Sieur de Gonville doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and discovered a great country to which he gave the name of the Southern Indies. He remained there for six months, and brought home with him a young noble of that country.\* The extraordinary tales which were circulated of the luxuriant productions of the Portuguese and Spanish discoveries, the rich cargoes arriving from them, the amount of wealth which they drew from the eager purchasers of every part of Europe, and the consequence to which the fortunate kingdom above mentioned had reached, did not affect the excitable inhabitants of France. The cause of this apparent indifference is to be sought in the facts, that the French people, warlike

in temperament, were absorbed by the conflict in which they were then engaged, and had neither inclination nor time for the cultivation of commerce and many of the other arts of peace. The period referred to was one chequered with civil discord, and in addition to this, some of its writers say that France with its rich, salubrious, and extensive territories, had not the same incentives as the inhabitants of the limited domains of England and Holland. But a better reason still is that France was not a maritime power, nor had it the facilities to become so in an equal degree. The British, Dutch, and Danes were inured to the dangers of a rough sea, and prepared to seek fortune in the teeth of billow and gale.

One of the ablest princes that have ruled France was Francis I. His comprehensive mind perceived the advantages which would result from the cultivation of foreign commerce. He proposed to his subjects the benefits which would flow from it, and exhorted them to undertake long voyages. The last of his immediate descendants, Henry III., was equally alive to its importance. In 1578 he issued an edict in which he pressed the same views, but with little success. In the reign of Henry IV., an adventurer, Gerard Leroi,\* a native of Flanders, who had been several times to India in the service of Holland, presented himself in France, and offered his services as a pilot, in the event that an East India Company should be formed. This offer was accepted, and the company accordingly incorporated under the king's letters patent granting an exclusive right of trade for fifteen years, on the setting out of their first ship. The enthusiasm with which the proposal of Leroi was first greeted soon cooled, as is unfortunately too often the case; and the company was dissolved without realizing any of those brilliant expectations which had been promised and were anticipated: indeed it did not even initiate a promising movement. Leroi, who fully understood the benefits which France, and he as the projector, would derive from the success of his scheme, did not relinquish his hopes. In the following reign he again came before the public, and, by the patronage of some friends at court, was enabled to enrol his company. The letters patent from Louis

\* *Mémoires touchant l'Etablissement d'une Mission Chrétienne dans le Troisième Monde, présentée à N. S. P. le Pape Alexandre VIII. par un Ecclesiastique Originnaire de cette même Terre: 1663, 8vo. Déclaration du Capitaine Gonville, daté Juillet 19, 1505.*

\* Marle's *Histoire de l'Inde*, tom. v. p. 211.



XIII. bear date March 2, 1611. This much having been accomplished, operations were suspended for some years, owing to disputes amongst the proprietors, and consequent want of funds. At the end of that period of inaction Muisson and Canis, both merchants of Rouen, petitioned the king. They requested that the privileges granted to the company should be transferred to them, pledging themselves that if their prayer were granted, they would in that very year dispatch ships to India. This proposal was of course strenuously opposed by all who had an interest in the existing company. At the suggestion and recommendation of the court, the matter was satisfactorily adjusted: a coalition of both parties was the prudent consequence, and an exclusive power was granted them of trading to the Indies for twelve years, and many other privileges. The letters patent were dated July 2, 1615, and were registered in parliament September 2.

In the following year two ships were fitted out. The officers selected for the command possessed the necessary qualifications—for the voyage in those days was looked upon as very extraordinary. They reached India in safety, but here they found they had a difficulty to encounter which had never been thought of. The great portion of the sailors were Dutchmen. On their arrival, the Dutch president of the Indies published an order commanding all the subjects of the states-general who were on board these vessels to quit them immediately. This order was obeyed, and both the French captains were abandoned by their men, and thus rendered incapable of returning to Europe. One of the ships was sold for a mere trifle; the largest vessel returned safely to France, and, although the company had the misfortune of being reduced to one vessel, the proceeds of the voyage yielded a balance in their favour.

A second expedition was decided on, and prepared with creditable speed. Commodore Beaulieu, who commanded one of the former vessels, sailed October 2, 1619, from Honfleur road with three ships. The commodore has left a curious and instructive narrative of this voyage, from which it appears that the vessels were well built and provided with every essential requisite, and the voyage conducted with skill and address. Two of the ships obtained their cargoes at Achen, in the Island of Sumatra, but the third was lost on the coast of Java, having on board goods to the value of eighty thousand pounds. The commodore charged the Dutch with having sunk her and all the men aboard. The two surviving ships returned to Havre in December, 1620.

Disheartened by the prospective recurrence

of such disasters, the company abandoned the intention of proceeding to India, and confined themselves for the time to the establishment of a colony in the Island of Madagascar, from which they calculated, at no distant day, to be able to prosecute their voyages to the original destination. But these hopes were also doomed to disappointment. By a series of misfortunes and a continuance of misgovernment, all their returns thence fell far short of the expenses incurred in the maintenance of their settlement. The consequence was the dissolution of the company, and for several years no effort was made towards pushing a trade with the East Indies, and no beneficial result remained to mark the existence of previous expeditions.

The next attempt made by the French to share in a commerce which was enriching all the nations engaged in it was under the patronage and guidance of one of the ablest and perhaps most unscrupulous statesmen that France, fertile in such productions, has ever given birth to—the celebrated Cardinal Duke de Richelieu. He fully appreciated the great national benefit which would flow from diverting French speculation into commercial channels. In his views upon this subject,\* he shows that he grasped it with a master mind. He saw that France, the greatest nation on the continent, had, during preceding centuries, concerned itself with wars which were, and had been, expending its vast resources in barren operations; whilst the neighbouring states of Holland—an insignificant corner of the earth, consisting of stagnant pools and marshes, producing beer and cheese merely—by its commercial enterprise, had not only been enriched and elevated, but had become the factor of Europe, and supplied it with many necessities, and a great portion of its luxuries. He reflected how in England, a comparatively small island, by its commerce in cloths, lead, iron, and coal, had penetrated to all parts of the world with—he remarked—the exception of China. Genoa he also adduces as an illustration; and then proceeds to show the advantages which France had over them all. The fleets of other nations were manned by her sailors; the fisheries on her coasts were abundant and prolific; and the abstinence from flesh meat of the Roman Catholics during the third of the year threw open a market for the sale of their produce. It was fertile in corn, wine, flax, and hemp; and everything essential for naval purposes was to be had there in greater abundance than in Spain, England, or Holland; the chief commodities imported into France were articles of luxury, and could be

\* *Testament Politique*, p. 133, &c.



manufactured with greater profit there than in those countries in which they were wrought, as the materials were the productions of the French soil. The entire chapter from which these few observations are extracted is worthy even now of perusal. The Cardinal did not rest satisfied with speculating on this subject. He resolved to give an impulse and an aim to French enterprise, and undertook to do it, as was his habit, with earnestness and energy. In June, 1642, while England was in the throes of civil convulsion, liberal privileges were granted to a company under his own immediate patronage. He did not live to guide or observe its proceedings, and his loss must have been a serious impediment to the infant project. Enough, however, had been done to secure it royal patronage; the privileges were confirmed to it by Louis XIV., or rather by the regency, as that great prince was still in his minority. Though in the undisturbed enjoyment of these exclusive favours during the twenty years following, the result by no means responded to the patronage bestowed, or the hopes indulged in. Every year a vessel was dispatched to Madagascar and no farther; but many of them were lost on the passage, and those which escaped lost several of their crews by scurvy. So that all that France enjoyed of the East India trade was a company without revenue, whose utmost ambition was to establish and maintain a colony in Madagascar, and in this they were equally unsuccessful.\*

On the expiration of their privileges, a private speculator, the Duke de la Meilleraie, resolved to make a venture to India on his own account. He actually dispatched two ships which reached the French settlement in Madagascar, the possession of which was yielded to him, but which he discovered was not worth keeping. It was insinuated at the time in Paris, and spread to the other places, that this adventure of the duke involved no personal risk, and that being master of the ordnance, he had made free with the king's stores. After his death the Island of Madagascar was sold by his son for about twenty thousand livres, a sum, it was asserted, far above its value.

It is a subject for reflection to what cause or causes can be attributed the fact, that up to this period the French were the most unsuccessful of European adventurers, especially as their failure was not the consequence of the hostility of their competitors. These pages are not the place to discuss the question. Yet it may be pertinent to observe that there were some circumstances of an external character

which contributed to frustrate the efforts of the company. One of these was the murder of Foucquembourg, who, on his return from Madagascar in 1646, was assassinated on his road to Paris, it having been falsely suspected that he had a quantity of valuable jewels concealed upon his person. This blow was prejudicial to the interests of the young company, having been by it deprived of the opportunity of consulting him on the affairs of the East, losing also his memorials and other papers, which would have been of singular use to them. Another misfortune was the death of M. Flacourt, who, on his returning to Madagascar with the king's commission as governor and commander-in-chief of that settlement, was attacked by Barbary rovers, his ship blown up (1660), and he with two hundred others perished.\* The third great calamity was the death of the Duke de la Meilleraie,† after he had satisfactorily compromised with the company, and had assured them of all the assistance in his power. This last disappointment led to the dissolution of the company, which surrendered its privileges in order to make room for a projected association.

In addition to the external prejudicial influences already mentioned, it must be said that the very patronage so much valued and so much sought after constituted a more serious obstacle, because its many latent evils were inherent and inseparable. When Richelieu determined on the formation of his company, he induced the chief men of rank and wealth to embark in it. The consequence was that there was always some great nobleman at the head of it. His creatures were appointed to every employment, and sycophancy, and not merit, capacity, or services, was the most effective recommendation. This favouritism, and the obvious imbecility of the management, repelled the best judges of the means of successfully carrying on the commerce of the Indies. By the English and Dutch these abortive efforts were treated with contempt, and all Europe passively permitted a monopoly of that trade to the maritime powers previously in possession of it.

The reign of *Le Grand Monarque*, rich in so many historic souvenirs, was fated to mark with its indelible impress the commercial as well as other departments of the commonwealth. As soon as Louis XIV. attained his majority, and took into his powerful hands the rudder of the state, he almost instinctively selected for his ministers men whose transcendent abilities and ample expanse of mind justified the accurate perception that singled

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. pp. 86, 87.

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 67.

† *Histoire de la Compagnie des Indes*, p. 22.



them from the crowd that thrust themselves upon royal observation.

Amongst these was the famous Colbert, of Scotch descent, whose brilliant services contributed in no small degree to make his sovereign the greatest in Europe. Well versed in public affairs, and having given his master, Mazarin, repeated proofs of his ability and sagacity, he was recommended by that minister to Louis XIV. as the person most competent to reform the deranged finances of France. He not only applied himself to remedy the abuses which time and the dishonesty of public servants had created; but he also determined on developing fresh supplies of revenue, and, amongst other measures, he conceived the design of reviving the defunct French East India Company; nor was he disheartened by the repeated failures which had attended previous undertakings.\*

Warned by past failures, he resolved to act with caution and foresight. He accordingly summoned to his counsels several merchants and seamen, whose Indian experiences could furnish him with such information as would enable him to steer clear of the rocks and shoals on which his predecessors foundered. The consequence of his inquiries was that he ascertained that there were three principal difficulties in his path. The first was the raising of the capital. The French merchants were ready enough to take shares, but not so ready to meet the calls. The second was the expediency of excluding foreigners, in order to make it national. Though he looked upon this as essential to its success, he was aware that by this exclusion he rendered more difficult the realization of the requisite funds. The third and greatest difficulty was the securing to the company such privileges and powers as might satisfy strangers and natives as to the security of their properties, and place the management in the hands of directors in whom unlimited confidence could be reposed. Having maturely considered the project in all its bearings, and formed his own conclusions, he then communicated the details of his scheme to M. Charpentier, of the French Academy, a man of deservedly great literary reputation.

The document† thus prepared is a masterpiece in its way; and as reference must necessarily be made to it, a few explanatory extracts may be here appropriately introduced. It prefaced with stating that, as former plans had failed for want of funds, that danger was here provided against, since, in addition to the con-

stant protection which the government was determined to give; the king himself, and the greatest and the wealthiest persons in the nation, were determined to supply funds in abundance to place it on an equally sound pecuniary basis, to say the least, as was the Dutch East India Company at the period of its institution. The disappointment which had attended the previous companies afforded no substantial grounds of apprehending a similar fate. Few such undertakings were successful in their first stage. The Spaniards had suffered severely in their early expeditions to America, yet they persevered, and were eventually successful. The English colony in Virginia had failed four or five times, and at length accomplished its objects; and even their neighbours, the Dutch, then in so flourishing a state, were unfortunate in the commencement.

The paper then proceeds to show that the island of Madagascar, a considerable portion of which was in their possession, was a country capable of vast improvements, and of becoming of far more consequence than any settlement possessed by the Dutch in the East Indies; incomparably more commodious and secure than Batavia, which they had made their capital residence.

As to the security of the company, it was a well-known fact that only a very small part indeed of the island of Java was in the possession of the Dutch, and that the rest of that large and populous country was occupied by a variety of fierce and turbulent nations, animated with a bigoted zeal for the Mohammedan religion, and detesting bitterly all who professed the faith of Christ; and, in fact, that every one of their colonies in the East was beset with enemies, whom their perfidy and cupidity had provoked: that by fixing their principal post in Madagascar, the French company would enjoy advantages never held by the Dutch in Batavia, because the island was equally convenient for carrying on the commerce of the Red Sea or the Bay of Bengal, and was eligibly situated for the dispatch of ships to China and Japan, affording a desirable station for refitting and provisioning on their return.

Having shown these grounds for the anticipation of success, the memorial then proceeded to explain the means by which the project was to be carried into execution. It stated that six million livres—about three hundred thousand pounds English—were demanded for the equipment of twelve or fourteen large ships, from eight hundred to fourteen hundred tons burthen. That a squadron of this force was necessary to convey such a number of emigrants to Madagascar as would

\* *Testament Politique de M. Colbert*, p. 182.

† *Discours d'un Fidèle Sujet du Roi, touchant l'Etablissement d'une Compagnie Française pour le Commerce des Indes Orientales*. Paris, 1664, quarto.



suffice for its occupation and defence, and form such a colony as would realise the objects of the company. An assurance was given that his majesty would advance one-tenth of the capital, and that the nobility and monied men of the kingdom would come liberally forward to contribute in proportion to their means, and to the national importance of the undertaking. The personal interest which his share in the funds would give to his majesty was adduced as a guarantee of his deep interest in the enterprise, and as a further encouragement he was willing to secure to the company an exemption from half their duties on all exports and imports to and from India, and, in addition to these marks of his favour, he undertook the responsibility of all the losses which would be incurred for the first ten years. Private persons were allowed to contribute in what instalments they pleased, till the entire capital subscribed was paid up.

The king not only permitted foreigners to take whatever shares they pleased, but to encourage them thereto, he likewise consented that such as subscribed ten thousand livres—afterwards changed to twenty thousand or upwards—should thereby acquire the right of naturalization, without any other trouble. This was a great boon, for by it the heirs of any alien shareholders were entitled to inherit their properties and effects, and, moreover, in case of hostilities with their fatherland, they escaped the liability to confiscation. It was also declared that the affairs of the company should be managed by their own directors, chosen from amongst themselves, and in their hands the funds of the company were to be deposited; that foreigners should be eligible to the direction, provided they had an adequate interest in the stock of the company, and resided in France. To save them as much as possible from the delays and other annoyances of protracted litigation, the directors were privileged, after being heard in the inferior court nearest to the place where the cause of action arose, to appeal directly to the parliament.\*

Thus did the celebrated Colbert, by a lucid statement stamped with the authority of his name, clearly demonstrate that the accidental mishaps of the past should not deter the French nation from making another effort to secure that share in the world's commerce to which its position fairly entitled it. He convinced the public that all former disappointments were justly attributable to the want of capital and the absence of judicious direction, and that repeated failures did not destroy the great natural advantages which

Madagascar possessed in its soil, productions, and above all in its geographical position; and thus he succeeded in convincing all that in the new undertaking success was imminent,—that the whole design would be soon a fact.

On this firm basis, and hailed with such hopes, was established the new and the fourth French East India Company, by an edict worthy of the object,—comprehensive, liberal, and ably drawn up, dated August, 1664, and soon after registered in parliament—containing forty-seven articles and fixing the shares—or as they were first called actions—at one thousand livres each. It reserved to the company a power of making further calls upon the proprietors, but not to exceed half the amount of each share. The charter was granted for fifty years, to afford an ample opportunity of forming great settlements, and the prospect of reaping the advantages of them.

The terms were faithfully observed, and every laudable means employed to impress upon the public mind the favour with which the government watched every proceeding; but the government did not limit itself to watchful observation, it used active measures. Officers, whatever corps they belonged to, were granted leave of absence without the forfeiture of pay or promotion; from the public arsenals was supplied whatever was requisite for the building, equipment or victualling of the ships, and exempted from all duties; the government engaged to pay fifty livres per ton for all goods exported from France to India, and seventy-five livres for every ton thence imported; it was agreed that the settlements of the company should be defended with a sufficient military force, and that the outward and homeward-bound ships should be furnished with as strong a convoy as the exigencies should demand. Even hereditary titles and honours were promised to such as should distinguish themselves in the service of the company.\*

M. Colbert reasonably calculated that the new company would do honour to that reign, and to his administration; he consequently gave it an undeviating support to the last.

The favour in which the project was held at court made it popular through the country.† Numbers volunteered to proceed to Madagascar,‡ and regulations were prepared for the government of the colony there, which deservedly won public approbation, though in many respects very strict. In March, 1665, four large ships equipped for war as well as

\* Abbé Raynal's *History of India*, vol. ii. book iv. p. 222. London—Strahan, 1783.

† Ibid. vol. ii. book iv. p. 222.

‡ *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 74.

\* *Vie de Jean Baptiste Colbert*.



for trade, carrying five hundred and twenty men, sailed from Brest, and arrived safely in Madagascar the July following. This voyage was conducted with such spirit, diligence, and success as to gratify not only the proprietary, but the nation at large, and every one was now inclined to speculate upon the visions of oriental wealth and national greatness which the enthusiastic had imagined.

The new colonists, as if they considered the old appellation one of sinister omen, changed the name of Madagascar, and called it *Ile Dauphine*. Shortly after the return of this expedition, a great reinforcement was forwarded, a regular form of government established, and also the company's first and chief residence, as M. Colbert originally contemplated, was erected in imitation of the establishment which the Dutch had raised in Batavia.

Although the coast of Madagascar is bordered with an unrefreshing fringe of barren sands, this sterility terminates at the distance of a league or two inward. The interior of the island is in perpetual vegetation, producing spontaneously, both in the forests and open grounds, cotton, indigo, hemp, honey, white pepper, sago, bananas, spices, and a variety of nutritious plants foreign to other climates. Oxen, sheep, hogs, and goats feed day and night in the plains; there are copper mines, and it was reported that gold and silver abounded there.\* Nothing was more easy than for the French to appropriate to their purposes all these advantages, and to establish a more solid and productive colony than any at that time possessed by the Europeans in Asia. "It was impossible," says Raynal,† "that so fortunate a revolution could have been effected by violence. A numerous, brave, and uncivilized people would never have submitted to the chains with which a few foreigners might have wished to load them. It was by the soft mode of persuasion, it was by the seducing prospects of happiness, it was by the allurements of a quiet life, it was by the advantages of our police, by the enjoyments attending our industry, and by the superiority of our talents, that the whole island was to be brought to concur in a plan equally advantageous to both nations. The system of legislation which it would have been proper to give to these people should have been adapted to their manners, their character, and their climate."‡ Such were the advantages which the French company might have

seized on and enjoyed in Madagascar, but these were sacrificed through the misconduct of their agents, "who were lost to every sense of shame: they secreted a part of the funds entrusted to their management, they wasted still more considerable sums in useless and ridiculous expenses, they made themselves equally odious to the Europeans, whose labours they ought to have encouraged, as to the natives of the country, whom they ought to have gained over by gentleness and by favour. Acts of iniquity and misfortunes were multiplied to such a degree, that in 1670 the members of the company thought proper to resign into the hands of government a possession which they held from its gift. This change of administration did not bring about a better state of things. The French settlers on the island in about two years after were massacred, and the few survivors of this memorable butchery withdrew from a soil stained with their crimes and reddened with their blood."

In 1667 it was resolved that some ships should proceed from Madagascar to the Indies with instructions for fixing an introductory establishment there. The two gentlemen selected to superintend this expedition were judiciously chosen, and possessed the requisite experience and judgment. The first of these was a M. Caron, who had spent several years in the Dutch service, and had risen to be the president of the factory of Japan, where he suffered severely, and having sought for an indemnification from the authority of the states-general in vain, retired in disgust and returned to France, at a crisis, too, when such a man was wanted. He was soon introduced to the minister, treated with distinction and favour, and consulted on every subject in which the interests of the new company were involved. The other was M. Marcara Avanchinz, a Persian; and native of Ispahan, the capital of Persia, a man of high birth and great influence at home, and from whom the company expected great things.

The squadron arrived on the 24th of December, 1667, at Cochin, and was courteously received by the Dutch governor, and thence proceeded to Surat, where it had been decided the first French factory was to be erected. In 1669 Avanchinz was dispatched to the court of the sovereign of Golconda, where he had several powerful and personal friends, by whose favour he expected to be able to secure the privilege of trading through that kingdom, of purchasing whatever merchandise was required, of employing manufacturers, and of obtaining licence to establish a factory at Masulipatam. This was a delicate mission, and his objects difficult of acquisition. It

\* Raynal, vol. ii. book iv. p. 224.

† Ibid. p. 233.

‡ Raynal's *History of the Settlement and Trade of the Europeans in the East Indies*, vol. ii. book iv. p. 235.



was a well-known fact that the Dutch and English, whose influence was very great at the court of Golconda, had failed in obtaining concessions not nearly so important, and that the representatives of these two nations had instructions to use all their influence to frustrate the efforts of the French; at the same time he was scantily supplied with money, an article as indispensable to an oriental as to a European diplomatist. Not disheartened by these untoward circumstances, he proceeded to Golconda, there successfully accomplished this important negotiation, and on the 5th of December obtained a firman from his majesty, by which the French company was privileged to trade to all parts of his territory, without paying export or import duties—a favour the Dutch were never able to obtain, and which the English had secured at very great expense in 1665. The successful agent thence proceeded to Masulipatam, where he had his firman registered; he also settled a factory there, of which he was appointed president, and in that capacity conducted the trade of the company with zeal, honesty, and diligence. These eminent services did not shield the honest Persian from envious aspersions and foul imputations. His competitor, M. Caron, by his intrigues had ingratiated himself into the highest degree of favour with M. Colbert, from whom he obtained an order in 1671, by which he himself was raised to the second post in the East India Company's service, and all the friends of Avanchinz were removed from their employments, and subjected to prosecutions, although in the order there was not one charge brought against him, nor a word to incriminate him. He addressed a full and satisfactory justification of his conduct to the minister, who, after a minute and searching examination, made an impartial report to the king, who entirely approved of Avanchinz's conduct, and testified to his innocence by a solemn *arrêt*.\*

It is allowed that the factory at Surat was established by Caron, and also that at Bantam in the Island of Java, which the French held until the Dutch became masters of that kingdom, and succeeded in excluding from it both the French and English. These events occurred some years after his death. The selection of Surat as the chief seat of operations was judicious. The advantage of its situation was appreciated equally by the English.

Surat is supposed to be one of the oldest cities of Hindostan, being mentioned in some of the earliest records, although in the be-

ginning of the thirteenth century it was nothing more than a mean hamlet, consisting of some fishermen's huts standing upon the river Taptee, a few miles distance from the ocean. It was greatly exposed to the attacks of pirates, and on several occasions was subjected to their ravages. To check these destructive inroads a fortress was built there in 1524. At this period it had risen to distinction; its importance was considerably augmented when the Moguls made themselves masters of it. Being the only seaport town in their occupation, it became the emporium of all articles of foreign luxuries, and the depot from which they were transported to all parts of that extensive empire. At this early period the Europeans, who had no great settlements here, purchased Indian produce, and Surat then possessed a navy superior to any of the neighbouring ports. The ships of this port were strongly built and durable, and mostly of a thousand or twelve hundred tons burden. Large fortunes were realized by the traders, and several were masters of a quarter of a million, and some were far more wealthy. The plunder of this place by Sevajee, 1664, has been previously recorded. It repeatedly became the prey of the pirates; nevertheless, it continued to be the richest and most populous city in India. It received in exchange for its exports porcelain from China; silk from Bengal and Persia; masts and pepper from Malabar; gums, dates, dried fruits, copper, and pearls, from Persia; perfumes and slaves from Arabia; great quantities of spices from the Dutch; iron, lead, cloth, cochineal, and hardwares from the English. After a residence of some time there, Caron began to think that Surat was not the best place for the chief settlement of the French. He took a dislike to the situation. He wished to find a more central and less exposed position either on the peninsula or in some of the Spice Islands, without which he thought it impossible for any company to support itself. His attention was directed to the Bay of Trincomalee, in the Island of Ceylon, the harbour of which was styled by Nelson "the finest in the world." It is almost land-locked, and the water is so deep that it is all but practicable to step, in many places, from the shore on board the large vessels moored alongside.\* He accordingly sailed for that port with a powerful squadron lately arrived from Europe under the command of La Haye, who was ordered to act under his direction. This project, which should have been kept strictly private, was incautiously divulged and bruited abroad, and a public and deliberate attack was proposed instead of a secret and sudden

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. p. 146; *Hist. de la Compagnie des Indes*, pp 63 and 64.

\* Macculloch's *Geographical Dictionary*.



surprise. The French, it is said,\* were intimidated by a fleet in no condition to fight, and which by no possibility could have received orders to engage. The greater portion of the crews and of the land forces fell victims to want and sickness; a small body of troops was stationed in a small fort that had been erected, and was soon constrained to surrender. A few who survived the hardships of the expedition—having gone to the coast of Coromandel in search of provisions, which they failed to procure at the Dutch settlement of Tranquebar or any where else—in their extremities made an attack upon St. Thomas, where, they were informed, a great store of provisions was hoarded. The town was easily and quickly captured by the French, who carried the fortifications, though formidable and in good repair, by storm, in 1672. They were not left long in possession. They were attacked and compelled to surrender in about two years afterwards; the Dutch, who were at war with Louis XIV., having aided the Indians in their expulsion. This disaster would have effectively crushed the enterprise after all the expense and royal encouragement that had been given, had it not been for M. Martin, who had come out amongst the late arrivals from Europe. He collected the survivors of the two colonies of Ceylon and St. Thomas, and with them he peopled the small town of Pondicherry, lately ceded to him, and which was rapidly acquiring wealth, population, and importance. But neither private enterprise nor royal favour succeeded in ensuring the prosperity of the new company. It became, every succeeding day, more and more apparent that matters were verging from bad to worse, and ruin was inevitably approaching with rapid strides. To consider in this emergency, and to endeavour to devise some remedy, a general court of the proprietors was summoned at Paris, and a faithful report of the embarrassments, perils, and apprehensions of the company was submitted, and the entire particulars, through the influence of M. Colbert, were presented to the king, who issued a declaration, September, 1675, by which he directed a dividend of ten per cent. to be granted to all the shareholders who paid up the amount of their subscriptions, and he allowed to all defaulters time to the 1st of July following to complete their payments, and then they were entitled as well as the others to the dividend. All those who should not have paid up on the day named, forfeited all money contributed by them, and this money was to be appropriated to the use of the company. In addition to these princely

favours, a debt of four million livres was discharged by his majesty, in compliance with the edict by which the company first received the royal patronage, and he also freely forgave four millions which had been advanced for their service. In the following year he gave a new proof of his deep interest in the welfare of the company, by relieving from all duties merchandise bought at their sales, except what was transported to Lyons, and even this was relieved from a great portion, having only to pay the one-fourth. During the ten first years of its existence it was thus preserved from dissolution solely by the munificence of the sovereign.

In 1681 some private persons having assured the proprietors that they would embark their fortunes in the Indian trade on being provided with licences, an application was made to the king for power to grant them. This was readily conceded on the following conditions:—"That these traders should transport themselves and their effects on board the company's ships both outward and homeward, and that they should pay their freight and passage before their departure; but that the goods they brought home, precious stones only excepted, should be exposed in the company's sales, and their produce fairly accounted for; that these licences should be in force only for five years, and if they should be found prejudicial to the affairs of the company, the directors might abridge or cancel them at their pleasure."\*

There was no favour, however extravagant, which was sought from their liberal patron, Colbert, that was not granted; yet this careful and generous nurture communicated neither vigour nor success to the speculation. When that statesman died, in 1683, the spirit of this stimulated commerce died with him. The company continued to have a nominal existence, and kept up not only a court of directors in Paris, but, copying the example of the Dutch East India Company, maintained chambers of direction at several ports, a council in India,—although their affairs were in a state of rapid decline; and their general account, in 1684, exposed the fact that instead of realizing profits, they had then actually lost one half of their capital. This sad state of affairs was attributed to three causes chiefly: the war with the Dutch, which continued from 1672 to 1678; the frauds of their servants in Madagascar and India, who sacrificed to their cupidity the interests of their employers (it was no secret that in the ruin of the company several large private fortunes were made by their officers); and

\* Raynal, vol. ii. book iv. p. 263.

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. pp. 158—160.



lastly, to the culpable indifference of the shareholders who had neglected to pay up. In this deplorable condition of their affairs, another effort was resolved upon to retrieve, if possible, the trade of the company, and it was resolved for that purpose to introduce a thorough reform, and change the entire system of government; to suppress all the little insulated chambers of directors, and to commit the entire management of affairs to the hands of twelve directors, who were to reside in Paris. Each of these was required to qualify, by the payment of thirty thousand livres upon the forfeited shares or actions, and to be allowed a reasonable salary. It was also decided that all defaulters were to forfeit their shares to the company, with a reservation that if in two years they should have paid in all their instalments, they should recover their former rights and have all their shares restored. These regulations were confirmed by royal edict in February, 1685. The company were empowered, if they so pleased, to resume the sovereignty of the island of Madagascar, which they had surrendered in 1670, or to leave it, if they thought proper, in the king's hands. After considerable deliberation and some delay, it was resolved that the island should be left entirely to the crown, and this act was confirmed by the king's arrêt, dated June 4, 1686. Some time after this remodelling of the company, eight new directors were added for the avowed purpose of increasing the capital. Each of these was obliged to lay down forty thousand livres in case he possessed twenty thousand of the company's stock, and sixty thousand if he were possessed of none. These contributions, swelled with the sums advanced by the proprietors, so increased the available capital of the company, that now the most cautious and intelligent men of business began to feel sanguine of success, and these anticipations were confirmed by the dividends made in that year and in 1691, amounting in the whole to thirty per cent. This cheering aspect of affairs was soon overcast by an indiscretion of the minister, and a proof thereby supplied to show, that however ineffectual the power of the ruler may be to foster and render successful any great social enterprise, his power to check and destroy cannot be overrated. "In order," says one of the authors of the *Universal Modern History*, "to understand that there is nothing easier for a minister than to destroy a branch of trade by an ill-judged and untimely interposition, the following instance, one of the most material points in the history of French commerce, deserves attention. The French East India Company finding that gold and silver bro-

caedes and printed cottons were articles in the quickest demand, struck into that branch of trade, by which they were very considerable gainers; and, that they might encourage the artisans of their own country, they imported chiefly white cottons, and caused them to be printed in France after the Indian manner, by which they had the command of the fashions; and when people began to be tired with one sort of goods, they revived their appetites by introducing another. The demand for these goods being by this means kept up and continually increasing, the manufacturers in France set up a general clamour that they were sacrificed to strangers; and that if a stop was not immediately put to the importation of these silks and cottons, they should be all starved. Upon this, out came an edict, dated January, 1687, by which this branch of commerce was prohibited; and it was with very great difficulty that the company procured leave to sell off what they had in their hands, and what might arrive by the next ships; but what was most extraordinary, they were required to break all their moulds for printing, without considering that this was as much a manufacture of France as any other. As to the brocades they were allowed some little indulgence, which, however, did but just keep them from sinking, with the assistance of some other favours, which the few friends they had left at court, not without much solicitation, had obtained. By this the reader may see how little safety there is for trade under any arbitrary government, where all things depend at best upon the understanding of a minister, which is a very precarious tenure, or very often upon his caprice, or the influence that he is under, which is the most dreadful situation people can be in that have any property at all."\*

The farmers of the public revenues, whose influence with the government in France was very great, also complained that the revenue was prejudiced by the privileges and immunities granted to the India company. The result was that the minister abstained from violating the original edict, but means were soon devised of gradually undermining these immunities, though they were not taken away. They were next prohibited from selling piece goods to foreigners, on the assumption that if they could not buy Indian goods from the company, they would be obliged to purchase French; but the fact was the foreigner ceased to attend their markets. The next step was the imposition of a heavy duty on raw silk. In this narrow spirit of commercial legislation all the pains taken by Colbert were rendered abortive, and as the inevitable result of such

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 87.



imprudent restrictions, after a very brief gleam of prosperity, the affairs of the company relapsed into a state of cheerless inactivity, which was rendered all but extinct by the effects of the European war which commenced in 1691.

Having so far followed the fortunes of the company in consecutive order, the progress of their affairs in India imposes the necessity of going back a few years. After Martin had made a settlement, with the consent of the rajah, in Pondicherry, a fine opportunity was presented to the French authorities of making an establishment in Siam. Some French missionaries had visited that kingdom, and had conducted themselves with so much forbearance, propriety, and friendliness, that they are said to have secured the love of the people, and to have inspired them with respect for the French generally.

Previously to this, a Greek adventurer, Constantine Faulkon, had travelled into Siam, was well received at court, and soon rose in favour with the sovereign. In the course of time, he was raised to the very important post of prime-minister or barcalon. In this elevation he treated both the prince and the people despotically. The former was weak, sickly, and without issue. The minister entertained the notion of securing the succession to himself, and he is charged with the criminal intention of removing the ruling monarch out of his path. To enable him the more effectively to compass his ends, he resolved on attempting to make the French subservient to his scheme; he therefore sent ambassadors to France, in 1684, to tender his royal master's alliance, and to offer some sea-ports to the French merchants, and to ask for ships and troops.

Louis XIV. eagerly took advantage of this unexpected proposal, which he justly considered calculated to benefit, in no small degree, the Indian Company. He accordingly dispatched a squadron to cultivate the favourable opportunity offered, but this object seems to have been only secondary, for the French writers say that it conveyed a greater number of Jesuits than of traders, and in the treaty which was concluded between the two kings, under the direction of the Jesuit Pachard, much more attention was paid to religious concerns than to those of commerce.\* The hopes created by the early success of the Christian missionaries were blasted by the conduct of the Jesuits now imported. These paid too much court to the unprincipled minister, who had, at this time, by his arrogance and ambition, estranged from him-

\* Raynal, *History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. ii. p. 265.

self the affection and respect of the court and the people. The missionaries, as his creatures, became unpopular, and the public hatred was soon transferred from their persons to their teachings, and to such an extent was this odium carried, that it provoked a popular revolt, during which their churches and monasteries were exposed to the fury of the superstitious and the licentious.

The fortress of Bangkok,\* built at the mouth of the Menana, had been given up to the French. It was very favourably situated for commercial purposes. The Menana flows through a valley of that name, and is the most important river in that kingdom, passing through the greater part of it, and, monopolizing its trade and navigation,† after a course of eight hundred miles, falls into the gulf of Siam by three channels. The town was also an excellent mart for all the productions of China, the Philippine Islands, and all the eastern parts of Asia. The situation of Siam, between two gulfs, washing coasts respectively one hundred and sixty and two hundred leagues in extent, gives it a command of the navigation of all the seas in that part of the world. Mergin, then the principal harbour in the kingdom, and said to be one of the best in Asia, was likewise ceded to them. This port would have greatly facilitated the trade with the coast of Coromandel, and chiefly with Bengal. It secured an advantageous intercourse with the kingdoms of Pegu, Ava, Arracan, and Lagos, where the finest rubies in the world, and some gold dust, were to be found.‡

These great opportunities were lost upon the French. The officials of the company and the Jesuit fathers were equally ignorant of their commercial advantages; and eventually, when Faulkon's treasons were ripe for execution, having but feebly assisted in his enterprise, they were involved in his disgrace, and the fortresses of Mergin and Bangkok were wrested from the French garrisons by the most cowardly people in the East.

During their very brief sojourn in Siam, the French made an attempt to plant a settlement in Tonquin. They considered that a trade could be carried on with safety and advantage with a people who had been for several centuries in commercial communication with the empire of China.

Expelled from Siam, the French Company, surrendering all hope of being able to make an establishment in the remote parts of Asia, began to regret the loss of their factory at

\* From its situation, this town has become the great centre of all the commerce of Siam.

† Blackie's *Imperial Gazetteer*.

‡ Raynal, vol. ii. p. 272.



Surat, to which they could not return, as they had left without discharging the liabilities incurred there. The Mogul government, which was anxious to encourage the traffic of Surat, and to attract as many vessels as possible to that port, often solicited them to pay their creditors. This they failed to do, and therefore could never recover from the obloquy to which their bad faith had subjected them.

Excluded from all other parts of Asia, the French were compelled to concentrate all their attention on Pondicherry, and on its effective fortification. But these designs were interrupted by a fierce war, which, though deriving its origin from remote causes, now broke out, and in which the French nation had to maintain a contest provoked by its own aggrandizing ambition against a confederation of the most powerful states in Europe.

To the prudence and ability of M. Martin were the safety of the French settlement and the prevention of the total ruin of the company due. The famous Mahratta chief, Sevajee, having approached the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, threatened with his formidable force to overwhelm it as a dependency of his enemies. By the friendly offices of a neighbouring Indian prince, however, a treaty was formed with Sevajee, and licence granted to trade in his dominions on payment of one thousand six hundred rupees. This treaty was concluded in 1680, and the territory had been purchased, the year previously, of the Rajah of Visapore. The only apprehension that was now entertained by the French, was lest the son of Sevajee, who was now the Peishwa, and had become the master of Pondicherry by right of war, might resent any attempt to fortify it; but his permission was obtained in 1689, and then it was strongly surrounded with defensive works.\*

As soon as intelligence was conveyed from Europe of the declaration of hostilities there, the Dutch, who had for some time looked on with jealousy at the rising importance of Pondicherry, offered very large presents to the Peishwa, in whose dominions it lay, to eject the French; but, with a morality which should have put the Christian to the blush, the son of Sevajee rejected those offers with contempt. "The French," he said, "had fairly purchased that settlement, for which they had paid a valuable consideration, and that, therefore, all the money in the world should never tempt him to eject them." What the Peishwa refused to do, the Dutch themselves accomplished. They besieged Pondicherry in 1693, having arrived before the

place with a fleet of nineteen sail, and an army of three thousand men, with a fine train of artillery and six mortars, and to ensure their conquest, they applied to the new Peishwa—whose laxity of principle, it is to be hoped, was not the result of Dutch ethics—who, on receipt of about twenty thousand pounds, made over to them the whole country. After a good, protracted defence, M. Martin, who was still director-general, surrendered upon very honourable terms. On the conclusion of the peace of Ryswick, 1696, the Dutch were compelled to restore it, and in a much better condition than they found it. They had built new walls and seven bastions, and, in fact, had made it one of the best defended fortresses in India.

Martin was again appointed governor, and dispatched from France—to which after the surrender he had returned—with a squadron, having on board two hundred regular troops for the augmentation of the garrison, and with orders to put the place in such a state of defence that, in case of a second war, it would be in a condition to repel any assailants. He took out with him for that purpose several able engineers, a vast quantity of military stores, and everything necessary to ensure security. He managed the affairs of the company with such skill, integrity, and wisdom, that he was enabled in the space of four or five years so to improve the town, that it could be scarcely recognised by its appearance. Not only were the fortifications completed, but the garrison was increased to eight hundred men; one hundred new houses were added, a plan for a large town laid out, into which, in a very few years, he drew more than sixty thousand inhabitants; and in 1710 it had become one of the most considerable towns in the hands of the Europeans.\* Had Martin's efforts been seconded by a liberal policy at home, the French company would have been placed upon a level with its more favoured rivals, the Dutch and English.

The intelligence and patriotism of M. Martin could effect no more than laying the basis of the future success of the company by impressing on the natives a very favourable opinion of the French, by the incessant and scrupulous attention he paid to training up well qualified and conciliatory agents; by the information he, with great industry, accumulated for his and their direction; by the excellent system of administration he established and maintained in his government; and by the daily increase of inhabitants in Pondicherry. But all these prudent and salutary measures failed to invigorate the waning prosperity of the company, subject

\* *Mémoire dans les Archives de la Compagnie des Indes*, num. i., quoted in the *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii.

\* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. p. 231, 232.



from its infancy to such inherent disorders as were calculated eventually to effect its dissolution.\*

Martin's original intention was to re-establish on a firm basis a great empire in Madagascar, and with that object he transported thither nearly seventeen hundred colonists, who, though cheered with the hopes of enjoying a delightful climate and realizing a rapid fortune, encountered on their arrival nothing but famine, dissension, despair, and death. Their fate rendered all after efforts apparently impracticable. The shareholders became defaulters. The government which had pledged itself to give without interest a fifth of the subscribed capital, and who on those terms were at this period liable for only two million livres,† advanced it from the exchequer, in order to sustain a project so much in royal favour; and some time after, it generously made a grant of what at first was a loan. This encouragement failed to effect its object, and the company were obliged to confine their operations to Surat and Pondicherry, and to abandon their settlements at Bantam, Rajapore, Tilseri, Masulipatam, Gombroon and Siam.

The fierce war of 1689 considerably increased the embarrassments of the company, even by the success of French arms. Several privateers, fitted out in the ports of France, by their vigilance and intrepidity, gave great annoyance to the traders of England and of Holland. The Indian goods which fell into their hands by the seizure of several prizes, the privateers were enabled to sell at a comparatively low figure. Though remunerative in comparison with their outlay, this competition had the effect of compelling the company to sell at prices under the first cost; and when they made complaints to the minister, he did not feel himself justified in sacrificing to their interests a body of men who so seriously annoyed the enemy, and rendered such essential services to their country.

Every resource having been exhausted, the conviction became general that the company could not persevere unaided; therefore they, in 1707, complied with the proposal of some wealthy merchants, who agreed to send their own ships to India, upon the condition that they should allow fifteen per cent. to the company upon the merchandise which should be imported by them, reserving the right to take such share in the ships as their circumstances should permit. Even after this they were reduced to the necessity of making over the entire and exclusive exercise of their

privilege to some privateers of St. Malo, still reserving the same power which had for some years warded off their extinction.

Although thus involved, and their situation desperate, the company in 1714 solicited from their royal founder, protector, and patron, a renewal of their charter, which was on the eve of expiring, and which they had now enjoyed for nearly half a century. When this application was made, their entire capital had been expended, and their debts amounted to ten million livres;\* nevertheless, their request was granted for ten years. Upon the death of Louis XIV. which occurred shortly after this renewal of the charter, the Duke of Orleans became the regent. To him the company applied for a prolongation of their term. In seeking this favour, the real object is said to have been to obtain a recognition of their privileges, in the expectation that should they so far succeed, they would be able to obtain from him more solid advantages, and such help from the treasury as would enable them to revive their trade. From the public they had no credit to expect, the period of their new charter being so very limited.

These expectations were defeated by the financial derangements which, having their source in a remote period, had been fearfully augmented in the late reign, and had come to a crisis in 1715. So far from having money to lend, the crown was enormously in debt, and the regent and his ministers, instead of having money to give away for investment in commerce, were engaged in devising means to make the commerce of the kingdom subservient to their own pressing demands—to fill the exchequer, to pay off the obligations of the crown, and to discharge the accumulated claims on the government and the nation. The contrivances to meet these exigencies were long known in France by the name of the System; and they, with their consequents down to the revolution, form no inconsiderable portion of the history of modern France.

One of the most popular expedients then proposed was that of the celebrated Law, a Scotchman; and it is more than probable that the high estimation in which the memory of the celebrated Colbert, the descendant of a Scotchman, was held, gave an impulse to his popularity. This state empiric engaged to re-establish the finances. His first step was the establishment of a bank. The success which attended its early operations silenced the arguments and clamours of his opponents. This bank commenced business in 1716. The gratitude of the French rose so high, that

\* Raynal's *History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. ii. p. 285.

† £83,333 6s. 8d.

\* £416,666 13s. 4d.



they pronounced the services he had rendered worthy of the most honourable monuments and testimonials a nation could in its gratitude bestow. Thus estimated, it is not strange that he found himself with influence enough to organize the Western company, the privileges of which were at first restricted to the trade of Louisiana, and to the beavers of Canada, but shortly after the Western company secured its charter, the companies trading to Africa, the East Indies, and to China were incorporated with it. This amalgamation ambitiously proposed to pay off the national debt, and thus relieve France from the accumulated obligations of ages, which had long weighed heavily on her, and which threatened to crush her to the earth.

The edict of "Amalgamation" extinguished the titles of East and West India Companies, as well as those of the minor companies associated, and substituted the comprehensive name, "The Company of the Indies."

To this new company was granted the

exclusive privilege of trading from the Cape of Good Hope to the utmost extent of the East Indies, as also to the islands of Madagascar, Bourbon, and France, the coast of Sofala in Africa, the Red Sea, and Persia, to the dominions of the Mogul, of the King of Siam, and of the Emperors of China and Japan, and also to the South Seas, from the Straits of Magellan to the East Indies, and rigidly excluding all the other French subjects from those parts under pain of the confiscation of their vessels and effects.\* All the property and possessions of the amalgamated companies were secured to them, but they were made responsible for all the just liabilities these companies had incurred. To enable them to enter with effect upon their extensive sphere of action, they were authorised to issue new shares, to the amount of twenty-five million livres, to be purchased with ready money only, on the same terms that the West India Company possessed shares to the amount of one hundred million.

## CHAPTER LX.

### FRENCH ENTERPRISE IN INDIA AND THE EAST FROM THE FORMATION OF "THE PERPETUAL COMPANY OF THE INDIES" TO THE WAR WITH ENGLAND.

So popular was the new undertaking that in an incredibly short time, instead of twenty-five million livres, fifty millions were subscribed. In this state of prosperity the company volunteered to pay off, at the rate of fifty millions in every month, the enormous quantity of paper in circulation, amounting to nearly sixty millions of our money. As an acknowledgment of this generous and patriotic proposal, the king, by an arrêt dated July, 1720, changed the terms on which their privileges were granted, declared the company perpetual, and restrained himself and his successors from treating them as other companies had been treated, and from this time they acquired and bore the title "The Perpetual Company of the Indies."

The capital, as has been already noticed, consisted of the original capital of the West India Company, and the twenty-five millions added thereto upon the amalgamation; but in order to guard the new company against stock-jobbing, a revision of the shares was made, in 1723, in order to ascertain which of them had been obtained fairly and by purchase. The consequence was that in the same year the king fixed the shares at fifty-six thousand,

and thus the capital on which dividends were to be paid was settled at one hundred and twelve millions, and upon this the king assured to them a yearly revenue of eight millions four hundred thousand livres. This revenue from the state was given because the company, by the proposal to undertake the national liabilities, had placed itself in the position of a public creditor.

In 1725, by another arrêt, five thousand shares were cancelled and burned, and the capital reduced to that extent, and their dividend secured by the annual payment of eight millions from the taxes on tobacco, the exclusive, perpetual, and irrevocable privilege of selling which was conceded to them in 1723, and confirmed to them in 1725, together with the profits arising from the Canadian fur trade.† Thus the fund for the annual dividends was as effectively guaranteed as it could by possibility be. As a collateral security the commerce of India was assigned, and the proceeds thereof were to be allowed to accumulate for some time, and to be eventually

\* *Histoire de la Compagnie des Indes*, p. 112; *Universal History*, vol. ii. p. 122.

† *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 1020.



appropriated to strengthening the funds for promoting that important trade, and placing it in a position to yield a large revenue to swell the annual dividends. With such securities, such extensive privileges, ministerial patronage, and brightening prospects, it is not matter of surprise that the shares were eagerly sought for, and rose into high estimation at home and abroad.

This short sketch of affairs in France was necessary to elucidate French proceedings in the East, and to show how the repeated failures of all the attempts made for the prosperous cultivation of the Indian trade had convinced most men that a repetition of such efforts would be equally unsuccessful; and that to prosecute it with success demanded the immediate supervision of the government. The ministers consequently resolved on taking it into their own care. It was decided to advance large sums of money on the speculation. In order to guard against the annoyance which would be likely to arise in the early stages of their operations, they undertook to pay the shareholders a stipulated dividend annually, such as was considered reasonable; and they furthermore considered that it would be prudent to suffer the profits, should any be yielded, to accumulate for some time, that sufficient funds might be available, as well in Europe as in India. This decision they did not make public; concluding that as soon as it was ascertained that profits accrued, the majority of the proprietors would insist on a distribution. They therefore judged it best to furnish no accounts, and also, to satisfy public expectation, to proceed actively to work. Accordingly, towards the close of the year 1720, the ministers, while they had money in their hands, enabled the company of the Indies to equip three ships for sea, which, in addition to a large cargo of European merchandise, conveyed a large sum in specie and bullion. This spirited proceeding raised the credit of the company and enhanced the value of the shares; and, as if in expectation of large returns, Port L'Orient was put in a condition, by new improvements and the erection of magazines, to serve as a convenient depot for the expected commerce. The result of these spirited efforts is thus ably stated by an author frequently made use of:—“Yet, in the midst of this seemingly settled and regular establishment, the ‘Perpetual Company of the Indies’ remained upon such a foundation as nothing of the like nature ever stood upon before, and with respect to which the time will not be lost upon the reader if he will be pleased to reflect that this company had a vast capital, but nominal only, for in reality and at

the bottom they were without funds; their commerce as described, or rather prescribed, by the edict of UNION, was, beyond comparison, more extensive than that of any trading company in Europe, and the means of carrying on their trade as much out of comparison less. Besides all this there was another circumstance no less extraordinary than the other two, which was, that the directors of this mighty company, whatever they might seem in the eye of the world, were really under direction themselves; that is, they depended for instructions, ships, money, and everything else, upon the ministers of state; and yet, to speak from what time and experience have taught us, these very instances of weakness and instability appear to have been the sources of all their good fortune. For the directors, in quality of that employment, having the capacity of only representing the state that things were in, and the necessity they were under, had no temptations at any time to depart from the truth; with this additional check upon them, that if they did, it would have certainly been discovered, and themselves removed. On the other hand, the ministers of the day, knowing that their continuance in power must always depend on the maintenance of public credit, took care to furnish the directors with such supplies as were requisite to keep the machine of their commerce in constant motion, that the opinion which the public entertained of the restitution of their affairs might be fortified from their progress; thus their balance, which originally arose from necessity, and in some measure from accident, was more happy in its operations than any contrivance that could have been formed by human wisdom to answer these ends.” \*

This ministerial supervision and encouragement—which would in England be as ruinous in practice as it is amongst a free people vicious in principle—resulted beneficially for France, subjected to despotic rule. During the fourteen succeeding years, sometimes three, sometimes four ships were sent annually to the East, and by slow but steady progress the affairs of the company were restored and strengthened. However, with this prosperous state, there was no accumulation of funds for distribution amongst the shareholders; the profits realized were swallowed by their increasing expenses, as the increase of the Indian commerce imposed the necessity of re-establishing their old factories and raising new ones. Indeed, for some of the early years their outlay exceeded their income, and

\* The author has drawn this train of reasoning from the *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, to which the reader is referred.

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 139.



though their European rivals, witnessing the steadily increasing extent of their trade, the regularity with which they exported to Europe, and being unacquainted with their secrets, thought their affairs to be in a flourishing state, yet such was not the reality; gradual supplies were required, and without such assistance many years would have rolled over before their commerce would have become self-supporting.

The directors of the company sustained its credit by the prudent disposition of the supplies from the East, and kept things in tolerable order; they had paid off the heavy liabilities of the various companies in the UNION, though these far exceeded their assets.\*

To Orry, who had been appointed, in 1773, to superintend the finances of France—which he managed with surprising success—the great impulse henceforth given to commercial enterprise in the East is fairly attributable. It has been generally admitted that he was an upright and disinterested minister; but that his character was sullied by a harshness of temper, which contrasted offensively with the suavity of the courteous French. The apology which he once made when a friend reproached him for this blemish, was characteristic and not very creditable to the nation:—"How can I behave otherwise? Out of a hundred people I see in a day, fifty take me for a fool and fifty for a knave." His brother, De Fulvy, who had less principle, but possessed more affability and a greater share of capacity, was entrusted with the affairs of the "Perpetual Company of the Indies," and under such able direction it could not fail to prosper. These able ministers plainly understood that further supplies were demanded in order to command a more remunerative trade and to extricate the company from existing difficulties. Before this was done, a most rigid investigation of their circumstances was made, and then, their affairs having been placed in the best possible position, the requisite sums were advanced. The ministers' foresight was gratified by flattering results. On the termination of the second year, the returns from the East were doubled, and a fair prospect was presented of a large additional increase; and, in fact, the third year yielded thrice as much as they had been. Port L'Orient, which had been laughed at as a depot erected for an imaginary commerce, seemed now to have been providentially and wisely provided for a trade which had become considerable and regular; and so rapidly did it continue to progress that in 1742 the public sale there

amounted to the large sum of twenty-four millions of livres, that is, about one million of English money, besides which they reserved goods in the stores to the amount of four million livres; and the first ships that arrived in 1743 brought home a still more valuable cargo.

All the European powers, but more especially the maritime, were alarmed by this advancement of a company so insignificant and feeble a few years previously; but these apprehensions would have been considerably modified had it been reflected that it was all artificial—a hot-house plant, which in an unnatural location had, by applied heat, been forced into a premature, if not an unnatural, luxuriance, and therefore subject to very probable casualties, any one of which would suddenly withdraw its sustenance, dry up its sap, and destroy the forced exotic; while its acclimated neighbour gathered strength from the soil and healthful growth. Much of the success, it must be owned, is attributable to the long continued peace which blessed the pacific administration of Cardinal Fleury. The true condition of affairs was made manifest to the company and the world during the war of the succession to the throne of Spain, which broke out in 1740, and involved France and the chief of the nations of Europe in the quarrel. But this war had been carried on for some time before the exposure was made, or any suspicion of it reached the company or the public. On the contrary, the company relying on its fancied prosperous resources, thought it its duty to give its assistance to the nation. England and France having taken opposite sides, the war between them was stimulated by their contiguity and rival positions. The enormous expenses incurred by France forced M. Orry, though very reluctantly, to inform the directors that public affairs were so complicated that they had no more pecuniary aid to expect from the exchequer, and should entirely rely upon their own resources, and carry on their trade in future as best they could. This disclosure and intimation scattered to the winds their delusive prosperity, and all which they had been doing for several years perished by the first exposure. The shares of the company, which had previously reached to two thousand livres and upwards, suddenly fell to eight hundred.\* But this was not the only injury inflicted; a worse than this was that the governments of Europe had learned that French commerce could not exist, as in other countries, independent of royal bounty. In France it was supported by the state, in other countries it powerfully contributed to their

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 134; Raynal, vol. ii. p. 327.

\* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 138.



support. Though, as has been just stated, this commerce fell by one adverse blast, the company was not extinguished, and new appliances were devised to restore it to life. The proprietors, having recovered from their first painful surprise, were enabled by the aid of a few lotteries to extricate themselves from their immediate difficulties, and to resume operations.

During the prosecution of the war the government did not overlook nor neglect the affairs of the company in the East. A sufficient force was forwarded thither, not merely for defensive but for offensive action, and the officials selected for the civil, naval, and military services proved the judgment of their appointments, and showed themselves equal to the exigencies of the crisis.

Dumas was sent to Pondicherry, and had not been long there, when he prevailed upon the court of Delhi to grant him leave to coin money. This permission the French valued at about twenty thousand pounds annually. He also managed to obtain possession of the town of Karical \* which entitled him to a considerable share in the trade of Tanjore. Some time after this the Mahrattas invaded the Deccan, defeated and slew the Rajah of Arcot. His family and several of his subjects sought refuge in Pondicherry, and were kindly received. Ragojee, who commanded the conquerors, demanded the surrender of the refugees and moreover a sum of money, amounting to one million two hundred thousand livres, as arrears of tribute; to which, he alleged, the French had formerly submitted. Dumas, with a generous resolution, replied "that he could not consistently with the honour of the great monarch whom he represented, surrender up helpless refugees who had thrown themselves upon his protection; that every Frenchman in Pondicherry would readily sacrifice life for their protection, and that his own life would be the forfeit if his sovereign knew that he listened to the proposal of paying tribute; and, finally, that he was prepared and resolved to defend his post to the last." This manly tone had effect. Pondicherry was not attacked; no prisoners surrendered; no tribute paid.

Though the Mahratta army amounted to one hundred thousand men, still the French were in the position to make a formidable, if

not a successful, defence. The place was regularly fortified, and well stored with provisions; the garrison consisted of between six and seven thousand men, and its walls were protected by between four and five hundred pieces of cannon.\* The conduct of the French on this occasion recommended them to the favour of the Mogul and his ministers, who ever after manifested the greatest kindness for Dumas, and the highest respect for the French nation. But this gratitude did not terminate at the mere expression. The young Prince of Arcot came in person to testify his sense of obligation, and presented a very fine elephant with splendid trappings; to this he added the cession of three districts in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry to Dumas personally, and this grant was confirmed by the Emperor of Delhi, and Dumas raised to the dignity of nabob, and to the command of four thousand five hundred horse. These favours were all personal; but, through his intercession, he procured them to be assigned to his office. Immediately after, in 1741, he surrendered his power and his office into the hands of his successor, Dupleix, whose transactions will more appropriately form a portion of the English division of this work; in those stirring scenes where the two great nations prosecuted—as no other nations can—the war-struggle for supremacy, and where he comes into no ignoble conflict with Admiral Boscawen.

Whilst Dumas was reflecting such credit and distinction upon himself and his country, the government sent an equally illustrious man, Bourdonnais, to another of the French settlements. The progress of events there challenge and merit attention.

The Mauritius, or the Isle of France, may be fairly said to have been, at that time, peculiarly the possession of the "Perpetual Company of the Indies." It was not included in the grants of any of the previously existing companies; not that they claimed no right, nor had overlooked it; for it is on record that nearly one hundred years previously to its concession, the French government had entertained the idea of planting a colony there. This island is said to be one of the most romantic and picturesque-looking in the Eastern hemisphere. It lies four hundred miles east of Madagascar, and about two thousand three hundred miles from the Cape of Good Hope, and nine thousand

\* This town and district are situated within the British district of Tanjore, in the presidency of Madras, near the Coromandel coast of the Bay of Bengal, on a small estuary of the Cavery. The French territory is completely surrounded by the British, and contains an area of sixty-three square miles. It was restored to them at the general pacification in 1814, on condition that no fortifications should be erected thereon.—THORNTON'S *Indian Gazetteer*.

\* Raynal, vol. ii. p. 331. The author in the *Universal Modern History* says that the Mahrattas continued in the field all the year 1740, till the month of April, 1741, and plundered every place within their reach, and tried without success what menaces would do with the Governor of Pondicherry: they at last accepted a small present and retired.—Vol. xi. p. 183.



five hundred from England. The first who made any settlement in it were the Dutch, in the year 1598, when they changed the name from Cerné to Mauritius, in honour of their Prince Maurice. The more tempting treasures held out to them further East induced them to abandon it in 1710, and it was afterwards taken possession of by France in 1721, and was called *Ile de France*. It may be here said, that in the possession of that country it continued to remain till the year 1810, when the British government, exasperated by the great mischief done to our merchant vessels and East Indiamen by attacks made from this island, and apprehensive of similar results to our traders by the French men-of-war and privateers, sent, in that year, an expedition for its capture, in which they succeeded. At the peace in 1814 the possession of it was notified, and from that time it has continued annexed to England. There is no exact account of the way in which the French first possessed it; but it must have been during the period the old East India Company's privileges lasted: however, the monument of possession taken, inscribed with the new name, erected by the Chevalier de Fouquieray, is dated September 3, 1721. Its first inhabitants came from the Isle of Bourbon, and were neglected, if not forgotten, during the space of fifteen years; and it was only in 1735 that the Perpetual Company decided on its occupation, and sent Labourdonnais to accomplish their designs there.

This man, since so famous, was born at St. Malo, and had been at sea from the early age of ten. No consideration could induce him to withdraw from his profession, and in every one of his uninterrupted voyages he was successful, and had signalized himself by some remarkable feat. He was the first Frenchman who suggested the idea of sending armed ships into the Indian sea; his skill in ship-building was well known, and also his capabilities in navigating and defending a ship. His schemes were comprehensive, and not distracted by his minute acquaintance with details. He apprehended no difficulty, and possessed the rare and eminent gift of inspiring all under his command with a confidence of his powers and in their results. On arriving at his post his first care was to master the difficulties of his situation. He acquired an accurate knowledge of the island, and his next care was to instil a spirit of emulation into the old settlers, who had pined and become inactive from the neglect with which they had been treated by the mother country. He subjected them and the recent arrivals to a wholesome discipline. He made them cultivate rice and wheat for the supply of

the Europeans who might touch on their coast, and he knew that a regular supply would draw many traders thither. In a short time all the ships bound for India were hither attracted, assured that they would find all the refreshments and conveniences required after such a tedious voyage. Three ships, one of which was of five hundred tons burthen, were equipped and dispatched from the dock he had constructed, and he soon proved to the authorities at home to what an important position their new dependency could be raised. These beginnings, pregnant with great promise, as is generally the case, did not meet with the approval of men of little minds, and a reply of Labourdonnais to one of the directors who charged him with having enriched himself, while he had exhausted the supplies of the company, deserves notice:—"I have managed mine according to my own judgment, and those of the company according to your direction."

He proposed to the government to place at his command a sufficient squadron, with which he would await, at the Isle of France, the commencement of the impending hostilities with England; and he promised when that event occurred, that he would proceed to the Straits of Sunda, and on that station—through which most ships sailing to or from China passed—would intercept all the English ships, and protect the French. Whatever might have been the result of this expedition if effected, there is no doubt whatever it was ably conceived. His antecedents, and what he afterwards did with a feeble force, confirm the opinion that it would have been fearlessly conducted, and would have seriously affected English interests in the East. Happily, his project was not executed on the scale he proposed, though the minister approved the plan.

Five vessels had been actually fitted out for him, and he had sailed with them. But he had scarcely departed when the directors, feeling annoyed because the destination of the squadron had not been communicated to them, regretting the expense incurred, and jealous of the power this appointment conferred on a man of whose previous influence they were apprehensive, remonstrated with the minister on the absurdity of it, assuring him that there was no reason to fear that the war in Europe would disturb the neutrality, which it would be as much the interest of the English as of the French to observe in the Indian waters. These remonstrances, unfortunately for France and the company, prevailed. Labourdonnais was recalled, and the promising opportunity lost of perhaps destroying the small squadron shortly after sent



from England to Asia, of making the French masters of the Indian seas, and probably of ruining the English settlements in those regions. Hostilities soon after commenced between England and France.

Labourdonnais deeply regretted the great political blunder, and remonstrated in vain with the directors and minister. Without money, without means, and without magazines, he by perseverance succeeded in forming a squadron composed of a sixty gun ship and five merchantmen, which he converted into men-of-war. With this small armament he successfully attacked the English squadron, and forced them to abandon for a time the coast of Coromandel; he attacked and took Madras, and proved to the home government that, had he been well supported, he would not have met with the reverses which will be noticed when treating of the achievements of the English arms in the Eastern conflicts with the French.

Before the close of this chapter, in order to make complete the history of French commerce in the East up to the period at which we have arrived—namely, the eve of the commencement of hostilities arising out of the war which was declared in 1740 between England and France—it is necessary to supply a brief account of the French Chinese Company, which, though absorbed in the amalgamation which constituted the Perpetual Company of the Indies, deserves notice for its previous and independent action.

The French historian makes mention of four companies which were formed for cultivating a trade with China. The first of these was formed in 1660, by the exertions of Fermenel, a wealthy merchant of Rouen, who had induced several others to join with him in the speculation, and amongst these were men of very high rank and influence. Religion was the great stimulant, as the object of most of the supporters was to transport to that vast country several prelates and priests, whom the pope had appointed to preach the gospel there.\* The royal sanction was granted to it in 1664. The commercial results were so trivial, that a second voyage was never made. The second company was established by virtue of a treaty with the East India Company in 1698, supported by an arrêt of council, dated January in that year.

The arrêt was granted to M. Jourdan, a merchant, who equipped with great expedition a vessel of large tonnage, which sailed in the month of March following, and returned safely with a large and profitable cargo in August, 1700. The success of this experiment raised the expectations of the public in

no ordinary degree. The same vessel was again prepared for the voyage, and returned in 1703, with equally remunerative results, though she had a narrow escape from shipwreck on her return in the Canton river. In consequence of these successful trips, letters patent were granted to the proprietors in 1705, by which they were incorporated with the title of the "Royal Company of China;" and, with the consent of "the East India Company of the Indies," their privileges were to terminate with those of the latter company. Within the space of eight years, three ships returned with cargoes consisting principally of silks, but a prohibition having been imposed on that commodity, the owners, in disgust, declined to continue their speculation. It may be also that this resolution was influenced, and in no small degree, by the apprehension created by the war which France then waged against most of the powers of Europe. Their privileges they still retained, and these extended not only to the coasts of China, but also to Tonquin, Cochin China, and the islands adjacent, and all the other traders of France were excluded from them.

In the year 1713 another China Company was formed under letters patent altogether independent of the East India Company, for a term of fifty years, extending from the month of March, 1715. This company dispatched two ships to China, one of which returned to Ostend in 1718, and the other in the same year to Genoa; but in 1719 it was swallowed up in the Company of the Indies.

In 1740, and from that to the present, Pondicherry was the seat of the governor-general of the French settlements in India. The affairs of the company were then in a flourishing condition; they retained their beaver trade in Canada, and the slave trade on the coast of Africa, which they lost the succeeding year. They had not only peopled the Isle of France and brought it to a state of prosperity, but they bestowed the same blessing on the Isle of Bourbon, and rendered both valuable possessions to France. Their trade was carried on to such an extent, and with such brilliant success, that they excited the jealousy of the Dutch and English companies. In the year 1734 their sales at L'Orient amounted to eighteen million livres, and in 1740 they reached twenty-two millions. In fact, having grasped at too much, they became sensible that their trade was too extensive for their resources, and that it was impossible for them to manage it to their satisfaction and benefit. Accordingly, in the year 1730, they importuned the king to take off their hands the trade of Barbary. He also resumed the trade in

\* *Histoire de la Compagnie des Indes*, p. 93.



tobacco, which had been farmed to them; out of this, however, they reserved an annual revenue of eight millions. In the following year the company surrendered Louisiana into his hands, and paid one million four hundred and fifty thousand livres for being suffered so to do.

The company was not without its adversaries, and some of these calculate their sales at a lower rate, but in their statements they advisedly exclude the imports from China, the Mauritius, and Bourbon, and all the private goods imported by the officers and men engaged in their vessels.\*

## CHAPTER LXI.

### BRITISH AFFAIRS IN CHINA DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE century opened with discussions as to the quantity and consequences of the export of silver to China, just such as occupied the city financiers in London during November, 1858. To lessen these exportations, on account of the Chinese trade, the directors of the East India Company ordered their supercargoes to send to Madras from China £20,000 in gold.\*

During the first few years of the century Chinese commerce was carried on mainly between Surat and Bengal on the one hand; and Amoy, Chusan, and Canton on the other. Condore and Mocha were also entrepôts of Chinese trade.†

The Chinese adopted the vexatious and oppressive expedient of compelling Europeans at Canton to transact all their business with one man called "the emperor's merchant." This was fiercely and perseveringly resisted; for the emperor's merchant proved himself incompetent, besides he had neither capital nor goods, his patent of exclusive trade being his sole property. He finally allowed others to trade on condition of their paying to him five hundred "tales" per ship. A four per cent. duty was after some time levied: the company's agents thus describe its origin; and it is inserted here as strikingly illustrative of the spirit of Chinese procedure ever since:—"It may not be amiss in this place to take notice, that this four per cent. is an imposition lately crept upon us by the submission of our predecessors the two preceding seasons. One per cent. of the four is what has been usually given by the Chinese merchants to the linguist upon all contracts, and the linguist was used to gratify the Hoppo out of this sum for his employment. The other three were first squeezed from the China merchant, as a gratuity for upholding some particular men in monopolizing all the business, and this used to be given in a lump, so that by undervaluing the goods, and concealing some part, they used to save half the charge; but to show how soon an ill precedent will be im-

proved in China to our disadvantage, the succeeding Hoppo, instead of the persuasive arguments such as their predecessors used, are come to demand it as an established duty."

In the year 1704, Gerardini, a celebrated painter of those days, a native of Italy, who had spent eight years at Pekin, adorning the emperor's palace—at the instance of the Jesuits—desired to embark for Europe in a good ship. The emperor sent orders to the Hoppo at Canton to facilitate his purpose: by this means the merchant fleet, lying in the Canton waters, was enabled to depart free from the impediments and vexations by which ships were commonly obstructed.

It was not until the year 1715 that the intercourse of the English with the Cantonese assumed a regular and systematic character, although the struggle of the earlier English adventurers to open up commercial communications with China had been so brave and so persistent. Tea now became a commodity of considerable export, but silks constituted the staple of trade. A house was occupied at Canton by the company's supercargoes, and their transactions assumed importance. M. Auber affirms that the usual course of procedure, on the arrival of ships off Macao, was for the supercargoes to land for the object of ascertaining how affairs stood at Canton and whether they might proceed and do business with their ships in safety:—"These points proving satisfactory, the ships proceeded to the Bocca Tigris, where some of the Hoppo's officers came on board. The supercargoes then intimated their intention of waiting upon the Hoppo, who invariably admitted them to a direct interview; at which, after compliments, they stipulated, through their linguist, for the

\* Peter Auber.

† Ibid.

\* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 273. Raynal after relating these particulars adds:—"Il est des Empires où l'on vend également le droit de se ruiner, celui de se délivrer et celui de s'enrichir, parce que le bien et le mal, soit public, soit particulier, peuvent y devenir un objet de finance."—*Hist. Phil. et Polit.* vol. viii. p. 110.



observance of a series of articles, generally to the following purport:—

“1st. They demanded a free trade with all people without restriction.

“2nd. That they might entertain in their service what Chinese servants they pleased, and turn them away at their pleasure; and that if their English servants should commit any disorder or fault deserving punishment, the Chinese should not take upon them to punish, but should complain to the supercargoes, and they would see them sufficiently punished according to the crime.

“3rd. That they should have liberty to buy all sorts of provisions and necessaries for their factory and ship, at their will.

“4th. That they should pay no custom or other duties for any goods they should bring on shore and not dispose of, and that they might ship them off again free of all duties. That they should pay no duties for wine, beer, or other stores expended in their factory.

“5th. That they should have liberty to set up a tent ashore, to mend and fit their casks, sails, and rigging, and other necessaries.

“6th. That their boats should have liberty to pass the several custom-houses or boats as often as should be thought fit, without being called to or examined on any pretence whatsoever, when the British colours were hoisted, and that at no time their seamen's pockets should be searched.

“7th. That their escritaires and chests might be brought on shore into their factory, and be carried on board ship again on their departure, without being searched.

“8th. That the Hoppo would protect them from all insults and impositions of the common people and mandarins, who were annually laying new duties and exactions which they were forbidden to allow of.

“9th. That the four per cent. be taken off, and that every claim or demand the Hoppo had should be demanded and determined the same time with the measurement of the ship.

“As the supercargoes required these several privileges, the linguist signified the same to the Hoppo; who consented that all should be granted according to their request, excepting the last article, as to the remission of the four per cent. duty, which he could not agree to. The supercargoes represented that it was a great hardship and imposition, and that they must insist on it; but at last, finding all that they could say was to no purpose, they let the argument drop.”

Matters went on after this manner until 1720, when the native merchants with whom the English supercargoes transacted business formed themselves into one body, or, as it was

called by the company's agents, a “Co-hong.” This combination was for the purpose of raising prices, so that by never underselling one another, the English and other agents were at their mercy. For a time, trade was from this cause almost impossible. The English, however, found means to present their case to an imperial officer of authority, whom they called the Isontock, who summoned the Co-hong to his presence, and threatened that if it were not speedily dissolved, he would dissolve it for them in a manner more certain than agreeable.

In 1721 an officer of the Hoppo was accidentally killed near Whampoa, and the Chinese took up the matter with much injustice and resentment, seizing the petty officers of some of the ships, and menacing the supercargoes. The English seem to have been the sole sufferers on this occasion. Once more the company's agents found means to reach the higher officials by their influence, which they exercised with such force and address, that the mandarin who menaced and insulted them was ordered into custody, and a promise given that he should be bastinadoed with bamboos, and turned out of the emperor's service.

Acting upon orders from home, the supercargoes, in 1722, made renewed efforts to create a trade fair in itself and free. In this year much injustice and large imposition of fines were inflicted upon the English in consequence of the accidental death of a Chinese boy in a paddy field, from a shot fired by the mate of an English ship at a bird.

In 1727, in consequence of the exactions and impositions practised by the emperor's officials, the supercargoes intimated their intention to withdraw to Amoy. This alarmed the trading community, and most of the restrictions were withdrawn. The removal of grievances was, however, merely to alter the purpose of the supercargoes to go elsewhere, and when it was supposed that such a resolution was laid aside, the system of impositions was renewed, and ten per cent. duty was laid upon all goods sold by the merchants. The supercargoes and Europeans then at Canton, of whatever condition, resolved to place their complaints in person before the Isontock. Every obstruction possible was raised to their doing so, and on one occasion they had to break through the outer gates of the city, and, to the amazement of the Chinese, force their passage to the residence of the great authority. Here they met with chicane, insolence, fraud, falsehood, and the grossest injustice, and they received at last some partial redress, but were informed they must never come again with complaints. It is



strange that no fault appears to have been found with them for marching in a body against the will of mandarins into the great presence. What a miniature picture of the events of modern times at Canton such proceedings present: the same spirit of cheating and prevarication on the part of the Chinese, and the same energy of will and daring on the part of the representatives of the western nations.

The supercargoes wearied at last of their attempts to obtain justice from the Cantonese authorities, endeavoured to make known their grievances to the court of Peking in 1728—thus exhibiting another feature of the picture presented to the world in the connection of Europeans with Chinese affairs of late years. As there was no way of applying force to the convictions of the emperor, it does not appear that he listened to their appeals, nor even that their complaints reached him.

The Chinese continually interfered with European ships and boats, and, contrary to existing agreements, when under the flags of their respective nations, adding yet another point of resemblance to so many parallels in the state of affairs in those days to that which brought on the Chinese war with France and England in 1857. This practice became intolerable in 1730, and continued for three years to be perpetrated in a manner which could serve no purpose but that of insult to the Europeans, and the gratification of an overbearing tyranny on the part of the Chinese.

Meantime, the attempts of the English to obtain a commerce with Amoy failed, the prejudices of the people and the tyranny of the superior classes rendering it impracticable.

Kien Lung succeeded to the throne in the year 1736, and he immediately issued an edict abolishing the ten per cent. duty. He, at the same time, showed a jealousy of Europeans, by insisting that within fourteen miles of Canton, all armed ships should surrender their arms until they were again leaving. As no doubt was entertained that the mandarins would steal the stores of war deposited in their custody, the ships' captains were very unwilling to comply with these requirements.

On the publication of the edict, the native and European merchants were summoned to hear it read, and commanded to prostrate themselves in homage to the emperor. This the Europeans refused, and the ceremony was waved, the Europeans making valuable presents to the Isontock.

After these events, the chief agitation was in connection with the 1950 tales exacted beyond the measurage duty upon ships. The letters of the supercargoes to the direc-

tors in 1738 imply, without clearly expressing it, that the depositing of warlike stores by ships' captains was not insisted upon.

One Foo-yuen, who appears to have had much cunning as well as authority, raised new difficulties in the way of trade in the year 1741. Indeed, with the exception of brief intervals, there was always some official sufficiently powerful, venal, capricious, or tyrannical to impede the free and fair interchange of commodities.

Towards the latter end of the same year, the first English ship of the royal navy visited Canton. It was the *Centurion*, under the command of the far-famed Commodore Anson, whose captures of rich Spanish ships, especially when carrying specie, so injured the Spaniards, enriched himself and his crews, gained reputation for his daring and nautical skill, and gratified his country. The Chinese were not disposed to be courteous to the commodore, and that officer, being ready and prompt in his actions, was about to resort to force, but for the interposition of the merchants. The commodore was averse to diplomacy and long consultations; his mode was to make his wants plainly known, and to take redress for injuries without any other delay than what was requisite to obtain a simple and speedy reply to his requisitions. The result was the Chinese greatly respected him when they found their first few attempts at procrastination in vain, and granted him whatever he desired, his requests being only reasonable and just. The impression his presence and manners created among the Chinese officials was aided by an exploit against the Spaniards. Yearly a vessel leaving Spain sailed from Acapulco and Manilla to Lisbon. Anson attacked and captured this splendid prize, and bore it into the river of Canton. The Chinese, although filled with admiration of the commodore's spirit and enterprise, could not let the opportunity slip of obtaining in an indirect way some share of his booty: they demanded duties upon the ships and cargo. He purchased provisions and stores of the Chinese merchants, who would not deal unless paid beforehand, and then would not fulfil their engagements. Anson demanded an audience of the viceroy by letter, and sent it by one of his officers. Before a reply could arrive, a desolating fire broke out in the city which destroyed one hundred of the principal shops, and eleven streets of warehouses, and would have probably destroyed the whole city, but for the opportune arrival of the commodore and his crew, when, by the exercise of systematic and intelligent efforts, as well as by dauntless daring, the fire was subdued. The viceroy was so much pleased with the disci-



pline and courage of the commodore's men, that he granted an audience. The commodore presented a statement of his own grievances at the hands of the merchants who undertook to supply him with provisions and stores, and also of the hardships to which the supercargoes had been subjected by venal mandarins. The only reply he received was that the viceroy wished him a prosperous voyage to Europe. Neither the commodore's services to the city, nor the sensation created by his dashing bearing and exploits could charm the Chinese where money exactions were concerned. They continued to cheat and to oppress after the commodore's departure, and in spite of the imperial edict.

An affair occurred in 1747 which widened the breach between the two parties. An officer refused permission to the mandarins to allow his *escritoire* to be examined. The Chinese demanded that he should be delivered up to punishment, and the linguist of the supercargoes was put in chains. The supercargoes resisted, and much contention ensued, the Chinese resorting to various acts of treachery to get into their possession some of the company's agents, who, supplied with provisions, shut themselves up, their reputation for the effective use of fire-arms preventing their cowardly assailants from close attack. It is not clear from existing records of those transactions, how the company's employes emerged from this particular difficulty; but in the year 1751 the supercargoes were engaged in the same monotonous and fruitless task of negotiating for the remission of the obnoxious "tales" upon the shipping.

The Chinese continued for a number of years to devise every ingenious means for tormenting the Europeans and embarrassing trade. Edicts were in vain published by imperial authority; the mandarins frustrated, by cunning in administration and false representations, any good intentions entertained at Peking. Among the most annoying embarrassments of the trade was the appointment of what were called security merchants. M. Auber describes this peculiar and oppressive measure in the following terms, under the chronological heading of 1754:—"A discussion took place at the same time with reference to the practice of naming security merchants for each ship, a practice which, it was stated, had not existed above twenty years, and to which the merchants themselves very strongly objected, as they thereby became responsible to the government for the duties and customs on all the goods imported in such ships, whether purchased by the security merchant himself or any other person. In like manner, he was also accountable for

the duties on export cargoes, and he became subject to demands for curiosities brought out in the ship; so that he was either impoverished, or the company charged excessive prices for the commodities of trade. An interview was obtained with the Isontock on the 29th July, who received the supercargoes very courteously, but refused to give them a written answer to their application that the merchants might be released from security; and on the 9th August two merchants were named for each ship, notwithstanding their entreaties to be excused; but they were informed that any deficiency would be levied upon the whole body."

In the year 1753 the directors at home forwarded instructions for the encouragement of the study of the Chinese language by their agents, and sent out two young men to study at Canton, for the purpose of becoming efficient linguists.

During the same year a mission was sent to Limpo, in the hope of reopening trade there, but it was unsuccessful as to any ultimate and long extended benefit.

The supercargoes became so wearied of the oppressions to which they had been subjected, that in 1754 they declined allowing their ships to come up to Whampoa. The Isontock did not feel it to be to his interest, in the face of the emperor's edicts, to allow the trade altogether to vanish from Canton; so he promised redress of grievances, and afforded a proud, yet courteous reception to the supercargoes. During this year the privilege of walking within certain limits on Dane's Island was accorded to European seamen.

In the year 1755 a new series of disputes arose from the prohibition of trade with private merchants and shopkeepers of Canton, all dealings being confined to the Hong merchants with rigorous strictness. After much verbal conflict, some slight relaxations of these stringent orders were allowed.

An important revolution in the trade with China occurred in 1757. The emperor, by edict, prohibited all foreign trade conducted by Europeans with Eastern China, and the European establishments at Limpo, Amoy, and Chusan had to be broken up. Such foreign commerce as might be conducted at these ports by natives was subjected to double duty, and although the native vessels of other Asiatic countries were allowed to enter the ports, they dared not while there carry guns, ammunition, or even sails. The whole trade with China was limited to Canton. This was supposed by the Europeans to be the work of the ever scheming Canton merchants, who by bribing the imperial ministers, hoped to obtain a monopoly. So



sternly were Europeans interdicted the ports of Eastern China, that vessels touching there could not obtain the smallest quantity of the necessaries of life, even when in the most serious want of them. The East India Company appointed a Mr. Flint, a man of resolution and ability, to proceed to Limpo, with presents of looking-glasses for the emperor, and a letter requesting permission to reside for some time at Nankin, as the representative of English merchants. On arriving there he was repulsed rudely, and returned to Canton. Upon his arrival at that place, the Isontock requested an interview, and, at the time named, he proceeded to the palace of that great functionary, accompanied by the supercargoes as a body. They were allowed to enter within the first and second gates, and were then disarmed of their swords. They were commanded by the mandarins to prostrate themselves before the Isontock, but on refusal, were thrown down and much abused. To their amazement, it was discovered that the object in sending for Mr. Flint was to kidnap him. He was told he was the emperor's prisoner, for going to Limpo without permission, and that he was to be incarcerated for three years at Macao, or near it, after which he might visit Canton, to transact his business, and depart never to visit China again. The native who translated into Chinese the petition which he sent to the emperor from Limpo was that day to be beheaded. The protests of the supercargoes were unavailing: Mr. Flint was actually held a prisoner for nearly three years at Macao. The foreign supercargoes of all nations met at the house of the chief agent of the English company, and informed the Isontock that they believed such tyranny was unknown to the emperor, and that their respective nations would find means to make him acquainted with the disloyalty and unlawful proceedings of his officers: they were treated with contempt. They had no force to back their protestations, therefore the Chinese did not respect or heed them: under the cannon's mouth they would have consented to justice, not otherwise. The traders, especially the English and Dutch, were ready to bear almost any indignity, if commercial gains could be secured, although, without that proviso, they were more ready to resist than any others.

The directors in London sent out Captain Skottowe, in 1760, to "settle the differences which had sprung up." The captain commanded the *Royal George*, and brought a letter from the court of the company to the Isontock. His instructions were curious, and his demands were very specific:—"He was not to be seen in the shops, or purchasing

Chinaware. That if he wished to purchase any goods he was to send for the merchants and not to go after them, and never to appear in undress in the streets, or at home when he received visits: he was to be called *Mr. Skottowe*, not *Captain*, and it was to be given out that he was the brother of his majesty's under secretary of state, who had the honour to write the king's letters.\* The court's address requested the liberation of Mr. Flint, who they stated was a British subject as well as a servant of the company; and after expressing their mortification at their exclusion from Limpo, pointed out the exactions and grievances from which they desired relief, viz.:—1st. The 1950 tales. 2nd. The six per cent. on imports, and the two per cent. on all silver paid the Hoppo. 3rd. To be allowed to pay their own duties, and not through the merchants who are styled securities, whom they charged with applying it to their own purposes. 4th. That the Hoppo should always hear the representations of the supercargoes, and that an appeal might be made by them direct to the Isontock." The company seem to have imagined that all these arrangements were very cunning and very clever. The Chinese laughed at them. It was unnecessary to offer statements of grievances, or arguments for the justice of their demands; the Chinese were already aware of the grievances and convinced of their injustice. With them the only question was what force the barbarians would employ: negotiations not backed by a fleet would always be unavailing, unless some singular combination of circumstances favoured the negotiations. *Mr. Skottowe*, his cause, and his country were treated with supercilious scorn. This the company might have understood would have been the case, for there had been a hundred years' experience of the Chinese already, and it ought to have been well enough known that the traders, officials, and people were alike destitute of honour and principle, and were capable of barbarous cruelty, when opportunity allowed. So little knowledge, however, had the English people acquired of China, that in the year 1762, at the suggestion of the Royal Society, the directors sent out certain queries as to the affinity of the Chinese and Egyptian languages, both bodies believing that the languages were identical.†

Feuds, oppressions, complaints, petitions, remonstrances, threats, and interruptions of trade continued until 1771, when a British

\* Captain Skottowe's brother was employed under Government.

† *China, an Outline of its Government, Laws, and Policy.* London, 1834.



ship of war having submitted to indignities at the instigation of the supercargoes, who feared that the trade might otherwise suffer, a native merchant named Puankhequa purchased for 100,000 tales the dissolution of the Co-hong; the money was repaid afterwards by the supercargoes.

A curious circumstance occurred at the close of the year, of which the directors were advised by their agents to the following effect:—"A small vessel arrived at Macao on the 23rd September, commanded by a Hungarian baron, Maurice Augusto Madar Beniofski, which event occasioned much speculation. He was at Macao, but not obtaining permission to proceed to Canton, the supercargoes could not procure intelligence, having no opportunity of meeting him. It was stated that he came from Kamtschatka, but by what track, or what were his motives, were unknown. He subsequently claimed the protection of the French, and had a chop procured for him and some of his officers to go up to Canton; and by their being mentioned in the chop (which was procured by Puankhequa), under the denomination of French merchants, and the Hoppo's officer at Macao having had them described to him differently before, he returned the chop to Canton, and would not suffer them to proceed. The mandarins were apprehensive they might be Russians, and Puankhequa, fearful of being involved in embarrassment, declined interfering. They remained at Macao until the French ships left China, in which they were to embark for Europe."

It is remarkable, in connection with this circumstance, that the celebrated Gibbon met with this Hungarian captain subsequently in Paris, and wrote to Dr. Robertson, the historian, then in the zenith of his reputation, describing him and his adventures. Gibbon's letter to Robertson was as follows:—"A few days ago I dined with Beniofski, the famous adventurer, who escaped from his exile at Kamtschatka and returned into Europe by Japan and China. His narrative was amusing, though I know not how far his veracity in point of circumstances may safely be trusted. It was his original design to penetrate through the north-east passage, and he actually followed the coast of Asia as high as the latitude of  $67^{\circ} 35'$ , till his progress was stopped by the ice in a strait between the two continents, which was only seven leagues broad. Thence he descended along the coast of America, as low as Cape Mendocin, but was repulsed by contrary winds in his attempts to reach the port of Acapulco. The journal of his voyage, with his original charts, is now at Versailles, in the *Dépôt des Affaires Étran-*

*gères*, and if you conceived that it would be of any use to you for a second edition, I would try what might be obtained."

About 1764 the Chinese set up a claim to try according to their laws all Europeans who had offended other Europeans, a prerogative strenuously resisted by the supercargoes. A French seaman killed a Portuguese seaman in the service of the English, while in the house of a native merchant, and then fled for protection to the French consulate, where he was maintained, the French at that date having assumed much importance at Canton. As the offence was perpetrated in the house of a Chinese, the government determined to force the consul's house, to prevent which, when matters came to an extremity and the French found they had no adequate means of resistance, the man was given up to the Chinese officials, by whom he was publicly strangled. This seems to have intimidated the Europeans generally.

A Captain M'Clary, who destroyed a country ship, supposing it to be Spanish, was incarcerated until the English paid seventy thousand dollars for his liberation. This event is variously fixed at 1779-80 and 81; it also showed the Europeans that the native government was determined to enforce its authority.

In 1779 two royal ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, arrived off Macao, being in want of provisions and naval stores. While there tidings arrived of the death of Captain Cook, the distinguished navigator. These English ships had been as far north as  $70^{\circ} 44'$ , where they were stopped by the ice.

The year 1780 was rendered important to the English at Canton by one of their company, named Smith, refusing to recognise the authority of the company in these parts. He was forcibly seized, but, nevertheless, in all other respects politely and kindly treated, and sent home. This was by the command of the directors.

Captain M'Clary again brought the English into trouble at Canton. Hearing that war had broken out between his countrymen and the Dutch in Europe, he made prize of a Dutch ship in Chinese waters, and the government of the emperor, or, at all events of his viceroy, were as indignant as the governor of a European nation would be under similar circumstances. The viceroy could not get at the captain this time, but he threatened to seize all the English at Canton, unless Captain M'Clary gave up his prize, by doing which the dispute terminated. Scarcely did one quarrel end than another began, and the Chinese were prepared for every contingency, as far as craft and treachery could qualify them for new inflictions of injustice. The



company's officers could not obtain the payment of debts from the natives, nor the repayment of advances. From such causes the English trade suffered up to 1784, when fresh disturbances inflicted still heavier injuries on commerce. A shot fired from an English ship accidentally killed a Chinaman. The officers of the viceroy demanded that the gunner should be given up. The English declared that the gunner had escaped; the viceroy demanded that some one else from the ship should be given up in his stead. The supercargo of the ship proceeded to the authorities to explain the circumstances; he was induced to go into the city, where he was detained until the gunner should be surrendered. All the European natives united, manned their boats, and presented an imposing force. The Chinese officials opened negotiations with other Europeans to detach them from the English, towards whom the officials seemed to bear a peculiar hatred, but this stratagem did not succeed. The Americans appeared in a prominent way, for the first time, on this occasion, acting with the Europeans throughout. After much parade of resolution, upon which the Chinese looked with a patient and quiet bearing, the English, as usual in their Chinese transactions, surrendered all they had with so much uproar contended for: the poor gunner whom they declared had absconded, they were obliged to admit had been all the time on board ship, and they allowed the Chinese to bear him away captive, for the trade was stopped. They "recommended the gunner to the protection of the Chinese!" The mandarins told them "not to be uneasy as to his fate!" The man was strangled, and the same day the agents of all the European nations at Canton were informed of the event, and that in case any Chinese subject fell by the hands of a European, no matter how, several lives from that nation would be exacted as a penalty. The emperor's disapproval of the falsehood to which the English had resorted to preserve their countryman was also conveyed in haughty, menacing, and insulting terms. The conduct of the English throughout the transaction was calculated to lower their nation. After declaring that they would endure all perils rather than surrender the life of an innocent man, who could neither have foreseen nor controlled the accident, and after having declared that he had escaped, they delivered him up, begging mercy for him, when, as might be supposed, their prayer was treated with mockery. The Chinese showed throughout a keen knowledge of the persons with whom they had to deal, and the surest mode of accomplishing their object. The "select committee" at Canton, in address-

ing the court of directors in London, take marvellous credit to themselves for ordering up the boats, and the imposing martial appearance they made, to which they attributed the termination of the troublesome affair. The surrender of the unfortunate and guiltless gunner to be murdered, rather than stop the trade, really ended the matter. The following extract from the despatch of the select committee shows how determined the Chinese government were to have blood for blood, even when a subject of the empire was slain by accident, and the difficult position in which the English were placed, until at a much later period, treaties, with difficulty enforced, gave some assurance of security:—"From the circumstances that followed the seizure of the supercargo, the frequent mention of Mr. Pigou's name, the president, in the several conferences with the mandarins, and the express stipulation that he should not leave Canton, and the concurrent testimony of every Chinese deserving of credit whom we have conversed with since the termination of the affair, there does not remain a doubt that the local officers' determined resolution in the beginning was to seize the person of the chief, if they found that of Mr. Smith ineffectual. As repeated experience shows the utter impossibility of avoiding the inconveniences to which we are constantly subject from the imprudence or wilful misconduct of private traders, and the accidents that may happen on board their ships, it were to be wished that the powers, if any, which we really possess over them, were clearly and explicitly defined, or if no law, or construction of law, now existing allows of such powers, how far the absolute commands of the government under whose jurisdiction we are, will justify our compliance, and how far, in such a case, the commanders and officers of the honourable company's ships are bound to obey our orders; at present equally destitute of power to resist the unjust commands of government and to carry them into effect, we know of no alternative but retiring to our ships for protection."

Some time after these misfortunes, several English sailors were attacked on Dane's Island, and one man killed. The president of the English factory brought the matter under the notice of the authorities. The man was found and arrested, and a communication was made to the president that he was strangled, but no proof was ever afforded of the fact, although the English believed, or what was more likely pretended to believe, the representations made to them. At all events, their conciliatory bearing was rewarded by a visit of the Isontock, who, for the first time, on this occasion entered a European house.



In 1787 the select committee received a despatch from the court of directors regarding the fate of the gunner, and the conduct of the factors on that occasion. This despatch was so wise and just as to set on its proper basis the policy of the English agents. The following extracts point out principles of action and probabilities which were for a long time applicable to the relations of the agents at Canton, and the current of events there, and, indeed, until wars and treaties in the nineteenth century modified and influenced them all:—"Experience had shown that the court of Peking would use its power to carry into execution whatever it declares to be the law. Individual Chinese may be, and often are, afraid of Europeans, but the government was not so. Despotic in itself, ignorant of the power of foreign nations, very superior to the divided and small states that surround it, the Chinese esteem themselves not only the first nation in the world, but the most powerful. Such circumstances and such notions had naturally produced a high and imperious spirit in the government, but no fear." Adverting to the attempt at intimidation on the part of the factory, and the effect it might have produced on the mandarins, it was remarked, "if they had any apprehensions, it must have been of their own government, which absurdly supposes that if a mandarin is active and diligent in performing the duties of his office no disturbance can happen, and of course if any does, it must proceed from his negligence." This oppressive and unjust system of Chinese policy was supposed to have operated on the occasion in question, for the Foo-youen was degraded soon after, and for some time not permitted to go to the court of Peking.

The power of the company's agents at Canton to send away refractory persons of the English nation was defined and declared by an act of parliament, which tended to prevent embarrassments of a particular description. The conduct of English seamen had long been a thorn in the side of the president. The tars of England were bold and unruly, and were prone to attack the sailors of other European nations, partly from national invidiousness, and partly from a desire to try their strength with others, arising from the exuberance of their daring. The court of directors sent out regulations calculated to stop these practices.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the Chinese showed more jealousy of the English than of any other nation. This arose from the victories of the English in Bengal, and from a conviction that as in India so everywhere, when once they got a territorial footing they could not be expelled.

The supercargoes and captains of ships were painstaking to avoid offence and were conciliatory; but it was all in vain. The opinion held by the Chinese could not be removed, that while the English were low they would be submissive, provided they were permitted to a certain extent to trade, but that if allowed to grow strong, they would drive all before them with a high hand.

In the year 1792, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas being then members of the English cabinet, set their minds upon an embassy to China, and arrangements were made with the directors of the East India Company to send out Lord Macartney. The directors and the ministry differed as to the measure, but were agreed as to the man. The English were now the principal traders from Europe in the Chinese market, and the trade was deemed valuable, especially in silks and teas. It was supposed by the cabinet that the address of Lord Macartney might remove the differences which existed, or, at all events, ascertain the nature of the jealousy which the Chinese entertained of the English, and whether their exclusive conduct arose from a fixed policy, or one that was capricious and temporary. The East India Company knew the state of matters in these respects already, and had no faith that any ambassador could mend it, but, as often before, they deemed it politic to fall in with the views of the government, however divergent from their own.

The ambassador embarked at Portsmouth on the 26th September, 1792, on board the *Lion*, Sir Erasmus Gower captain. Our space will not allow of a minute description; the author of an account of the British and Foreign embassies to, and intercourse with, that empire, sums up, in the following laconic style, the history of Lord Macartney's embassy, published in London shortly after his return. "The whole course of the embassy, from its arrival and disembarkation at the river Pe-ho; its progress towards Peking; the designation on the flags of the boats in which Lord Macartney and his suite embarked, 'the ambassador bearing tribute from the King of England;' the consent of his lordship to go through the ceremony before the Chinese throne, provided a Chinese did the same to the picture of the King of England; the journey of his lordship and suite to Ge-hol, the country seat of the emperor, who was in his eighty-third year, and who rose each morning at three o'clock and retired at six in the afternoon; the ceremony being waived by the reception of the ambassador on merely bending his knee; the studied respect shown to the embassy and suite amidst the jealous and careful watchfulness of the Calao and



Legate; the degradation of the latter because he had not gone on board the *Lion* on her arrival with the ambassador, as desired by the emperor, and being consequently obliged to wear an opaque white instead of a transparent blue button, and a crow's instead of a peacock's tail pendent from his cap; together with the various entertainments given by the emperor, are so fully detailed in the account of the embassy published shortly after its reaching England, that it would be quite superfluous now to enter upon them. The embassy was about fifty days from the period of landing at Pe-ho to that of its quitting Tien Sing on its return to Canton."

The aim of the Chinese court was to trick and outwit his lordship. It had no intention of negotiating honestly or prosecuting trade on terms of mutual advantage, but was desirous of keeping open every point which would by its uncertainty leave to the stronger on the spot the power to determine the issue off hand. Lord Macartney thought otherwise, but he was deceived. The issue falsified the expectations of Pitt and Dundas, and confirmed the prognostications of the directors of the East India Company.

Most of the forms and ceremonies which were observed during the embassies of the Russians and Dutch, noticed on previous pages, were insisted upon with Lord Macartney: after hundreds of years the court of Pekin was still the same. His lordship chiefly attributed the failure of his negotiations to the alarm created by the exploits of the English in Hindostan.

His "celestial" majesty condescended to write to his English tributary, declaring that none of his requests could be granted; that they were impracticable, and in fact improper. Having given a most explicit refusal in terms not insulting, except so far as they were haughty and assuming, "the emperor of the universe and the son of Heaven" thus exhorted the King of England on the subject of the latter's petition:—"I again admonish you, O king, to act conformably to my intentions, that we may preserve peace and amity on each side, and thereby contribute to our reciprocal happiness. After this, my solemn warning, should your majesty, in pursuance of your ambassador's demands, fit out ships in order to attempt to trade either at Ning Po, Tehu San, Tien Sing, or other places, as our laws are exceedingly severe, in such case I shall be under the necessity of directing my mandarins to force your ships to quit these ports, and thus the increased trouble and exertions of your merchants would at once be frustrated. You will not then, however, be able to complain that I had not clearly fore-

warned you. Let us, therefore, live in peace and friendship, and do not make light of my words. For this reason I have so repeatedly and earnestly written to you upon this subject."

On the 4th September, 1794, Lord Macartney arrived in safety with his ship. The wonderful perseverance of the English was not exhausted; failure seemed only to sharpen their persistence. Presents were sent from England to the emperor and his great officers, and every step in presenting them was marked with extraordinary deference to Chinese custom and prejudice. These presents consisted of such manufactures as it was supposed would be profitable to the English to sell, and pleasant to the Chinese to buy. The manufactures were accompanied by letters from his majesty and his ministers, as well as from Lord Macartney; and all were as sanguine of success as if the Chinese had only just been heard of, and the writers of the epistles had never studied human nature in its oriental phases.

The viceroy and the Hoppo at Canton pretended that the letters and presents must have been intended for their predecessors, and therefore it was improper to receive them; but the despatches and gifts for the emperor were forwarded. Some slight relaxations at Canton followed, but they were of short duration.

In 1800 an English ship-of-war fired into a Chinese boat at night, the crew of which, the captain had reason to believe, intended to cut his cable, as he had been repeatedly robbed. A Chinese was wounded, another leaped into the river and was drowned. The new viceroy was somewhat partial to the English, but the usual demand was made for the person who fired to be delivered up to a Chinese tribunal. The traders at Canton fearing that nothing short of this would satisfy the authorities, without recommending the surrender, indicated its necessity. Captain Dillon bravely said that no sailor of his should be examined but in his presence, and with adequate guarantee for his safety; but he would take upon himself the act done and its consequences, and it would then remain for the Emperor of China and the King of England to settle the dispute as one that pertained to themselves. This bold procedure at once preserved the sailor, who had merely performed his duty, the Chinese boat having refused to be warned off, and the honour of England was maintained. The wounded Chinese recovered, and, under the pretence that the drowned man had been in fault himself in leaping overboard, the viceroy declared that he had no further demand to make on the gallant captain.



Some English sailors, who had escaped from an American ship, on board of which they had been barbarously ill-used, were received at a place remote from Canton, most kindly treated, and sent to the factory. This circumstance led to mutual acts of politeness, and tended to soften the asperity of the intercourse.

The century closed, leaving the English in possession of but few advantages in their trade with China which they had not when first they found any footing there. Fear of English arms began to prevail, and induced a constrained respect, but deepened the dislike of the Chinese people and officials to the English nation.

## CHAPTER LXII.

### THE BRITISH IN WESTERN INDIA DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century was destined to be one of deep interest to India. Events of the greatest magnitude were determined by an all-wise Providence for its history. Eastern India became the chief theatre of the exploits which throw such a halo of romance over the history of the period. Western India, containing the oldest settlements of the company, demands, however, the first notice. The century opened at Surat upon scenes of strife and bitterness between the two companies, to which reference has been made in previous chapters, as darkening the character of English commerce during the closing years of the century which had just passed away. Sir Nicholas Waite and Sir William Norress waged incessant warfare upon one another, being what might be called the plenipotentiaries of the two companies in India. The amount of money consumed in bribing the Mogul and his great officers and chief religious advisers was enormous; and as this rivalry of corruption was intense, and the court was influenced by no views of what was just, but simply by venality, it was impossible for his imperial majesty to administer speedy any more than "cheap justice." \* To such an extent did the rivals carry their animosity, that the old company refused to allow deceased servants of the new to find a resting place in their graveyard at Surat, and but for the superior charity of the Armenians these deceased Englishmen must have remained unburied.

The diary of the English Company's factory at Surat retains painful evidence of the broils and debauchery of their servants there at the beginning of the century. The author of *The English in Western India* presents the following terrible picture:—"Possibly it will occur to the reader, as it has occurred to the writer—that the *dramatis personæ* in this

chapter are all men of bad character; that I only present offensive details which are relieved by no examples of goodness and honour. I can only say that I represent the matter faithfully as recorded by the best authorities of the age. Vices were then trifles; to be corrupt and to corrupt others was the fashion. I do not find a word of anything good in the local annals either written or printed."

Scenes of violence and bloodshed were common among the highest officials, and their language was such as might be supposed common to the lowest blackguards, although in official documents there was much cant, and the assumption of spirituality. The most striking features of English character at Surat were at this time tyranny, and general contempt for law. Men were cast into prison at the caprice of the president, swords were drawn by members of council against one another on occasions that were trivial. Each official seemed to take pleasure in oppressing him who was just below him, and all treated such of the natives as were in their service as if they were brutes, rather than men and brothers. The author last quoted gives the following as a sample of the headstrong and brutal character of the English at the beginning of the century, showing that under the Stuarts, after the restoration, the English character had rapidly deteriorated, so that they could scarcely be regarded as men resembling their fathers of half a century before:—"John Wyatt had command of the guards for the day, and about eleven o'clock at night left the apartments of Mr. Demetrius and Mr. Wright for his own quarters. At this time he was much intoxicated, although quite sober and rational when brought before the council at five the next morning. After leaving his friends, when he came near his own door, the sentry challenged him, upon

\* Bruce's *Annals*, 1700—1702.

which the captain became extremely angry, drew his sword, and made a thrust at him. The sentry fled, and one who was stationed at Woodford's door followed his example. Both made for the main guard, pressed hard by their persecutor. Just at that moment the sand of the hour-glass had run out, and the sepoy, in whose charge it was, called to another to strike the gong. This seemed to add fuel to Wyatt's rage; he instantly ordered the corporal of the guard to relieve and bring the sentry before him. He then commenced to beat the poor fellow, asking him how he dared to have the gong struck without waiting for his orders. The other meekly replied that he was merely acting according to established rule, but for the future he would only act as the captain should think proper, and begged that he would cease beating him. Wyatt then took the man by the arm, deliberately turned him round, and ran his sword through his side. The sepoy dropped down dead upon the spot. This savage madman added to the barbarity of his crime by kicking and otherwise abusing the corpse of his murdered victim. The deputy governor was immediately summoned from his bed, and had the murderer secured. The decision of the governor in council was, that Captain Wyatt should be deprived of his commission, confined in irons, and sent to England." This sample of English life at Surat is followed by another on the same pages, which will suffice to illustrate the utterly corrupt state of social existence in the factories:—"In March, 1701, we find John Hall, Provost Marshal, confined to the Fort of Dongari. There was once an intention of giving him an ensigncy; but he was then charged with being an infamous drunkard, and in other respects a bad character. When required to clear himself of these charges, he only cursed and swore at every one, from the highest to the lowest, expressing a hope that the time might come when he would have his revenge. The government were obliged to put him in confinement at Dongari, although, as they significantly remarked, 'having too many such as he is in that or one fort or other, and with submission to your excellency in council, if they were all sent home, there would be a happy riddance of them.' Hall was accordingly shipped off, but Sir John Gayer, the general, and his council, thought that his masters had acted too precipitately."

The dawn of the century in Bombay witnessed a succession of fearful calamities. Crime was the first and greatest of these, for Bombay was even worse than Surat. A pestilence broke out, which carried away very

many of the natives, and, at its termination, only seventy-six Europeans remained alive—a proportion of these exhausted by sickness. Scarcely had the pestilence spent itself, when a violent storm raged along the Malabar coast, swept the island of Bombay of its produce, levelled property in the city, and, notwithstanding the shelter of the harbour, wrecked nearly all the ships there.\* The poverty of the factories was such, that the agents had not sufficient food; indeed the whole island was on the brink of ruin. Sir John Gayer informed his masters that there was only one horse fit to be ridden, and only one pair of oxen which were able to draw a coach.

While matters were in this state at the factories, all India, but more especially Western India, was in turmoil. Within five days' march of Bombay, Singhar was besieged by one of the many Mussulman powers into which the Mogul empire was breaking. The Mahrattas (Marathas) were rapidly growing in power, they were unquiet neighbours, levying contributions on the country, and preventing, by their devastations and forays, the cultivation of indigo.† The Mahratta fleet infested the harbour, keeping the English in perpetual alarm.‡

Whenever a trouble happened to the English in India, they found the Portuguese Jesuits at the bottom of it. The intrigues of those unprincipled men were at this time exerted to cause attacks from the Mahrattas, and prevent the arrival of provisions at Bombay. Perceiving the low state of the English from the combined causes above-named, the Portuguese sought occasion for quarrel, and at last assembled a fleet in Bombay harbour. At this juncture, the Arabs, who just then professed friendship for the English, arrived with a superior fleet, destroyed the Portuguese ships, landed on the island of Salsette, and put to the sword not only the garrison, but women and children. Such of the Portuguese as escaped were glad to find shelter and protection with the English.

An ambassador from the King of Abyssinia to the general and president of Bombay, proposed the opening of commercial relations. He was received as well as the unfortunate circumstances of the presidency at the time allowed, and was sent back with such presents as the general was able to bestow. The documents connected with this interesting episode in the history of Bombay are nearly all lost, but the following singular letter, from the president to the king, at once throws light upon the times, and remains as

\* Bruce, 1702-3.

† Bruce's *Annals*.

‡ Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*.



a curiosity in the archives of literature and politics :—

*John Gayer, general for affaires of the Right Honourable East India Company in India, residing at Bombay, sendeth greeting to his most excellent Majesty Thoran, King of Abissine, and worshipper of Jesus, the Son of Mary, according to the laws of the Blessed Messias.*

Your Majesty's royal letters and present of seven horses, twenty slaves, and three horns of civit I was honoured with in behalf of the Right Honourable East India Company, by your noble ambassador, Dumontre, whome received with all possible demonstration of honour, love, and affection, and have continued the same to him all the time of his abode in these parts, and now have taken care to transport him back to your territories with the President of the Right Honourable East India Company to your most sacred majesty, an account of which comes with this. That your most excellent majesty will graciously be pleased to accept thereof, and to lay your royal commands on me for the future, as in your most serenely and princely wisdom shall seem meet, is most humbly desired.\*

The negotiations in England for the union of the two companies (noticed in a previous chapter) did not promote concord among their servants in India. Sir John Childs, in the former century, had brought the company he served to the verge of bankruptcy by his ill-judged aggressive policy; and the agents of the English Company, which was solvent, objected to a junction with the London Company, which was in a state of all but declared insolvency. The agents of the London Company could not be brought to regard their rivals as other than interlopers. It required years of discreet interposition by the directors of the united company to cancel the malignant jealousies which raged between these two classes of agents in India.

The miseries to which the servants of the old company were subjected at Surat were great, in consequence of the offence taken by the Mogul because of the plunder of native merchant ships by rovers. Indeed the factors of all nations then having factories at Surat suffered more or less on this account, but the English company's agents continued to gain favour with the viceroy, and escaped these trials. The Rev. Mr. Anderson, quoting the diary of the London Company's factory at Surat from the 30th August to 11th October, 1704, thus depicts the condition of the Europeans at Surat at that unhappy juncture :—"The servants of the old company who were confined within the walls of their factory were the Right Hon'ble Sir John Gayer, general, the Hon'ble Stephen Colt, president, the worshipful Ephraim Bendell, Bernard Wyche, the accountant, and Purser Marine, the chaplain, four senior and five

\* *Diary of the London Company's Factory at Surat, 1701-1704.*

junior factors, six writers and one surgeon. Instead of being encouraged to hope for a speedy release, these unfortunate persons were almost reduced to despair by hearing that some Europeans had committed fresh acts of piracy. Two piratical vessels had sighted five vessels belonging to Mussulmans, and immediately given them chase. Under cover of the night two of these merchant men proceeded on their voyage without molestation, a third had been compelled to alter her course, a fourth had been driven ashore at Swally, and the fifth captured. Great sensation was caused at Surat when these facts were known, and the governor asserted that the pirates came from Bombay. Alarmed at his threats the factors prepared to defend themselves within their walls. In anticipation that their usual supplies of provisions would be withheld, they had ordered a stock to be laid in, but sufficient time was not allowed them, and they were soon reduced to extremities. An ox; which they used for drawing water, was with great difficulty kept alive by feeding it with the straw in which wine had been packed, and at last was killed for food. Meanwhile the infuriated governor had seized the brokers of both the Dutch and London companies, hung them up by their heels, and flogged them until he extorted from them a promise to indemnify the losses of the native merchants with a payment of seven lacs of rupees. He then resolved to lay hold of the factors, and that he might starve them out the sooner, drove into their factory three English strangers whom he had apprehended, and who he trusted would help to consume their provisions. Nor did he spare threats, but vowed that he would have them alive or dead. They in reply declared they would never give themselves up, and would rather die than suffer again such misery as had been inflicted on them in their former confinement. At last, after twelve days, the governor moderated his fury, and consented to allow them a small supply of provisions. As an aggravation of their sufferings they not only knew that their rivals, Waite and his friends, were at liberty, but could see that they had hoisted the union jack as if to flout at their misery. The perseverance which they manifested when their circumstances were almost desperate was highly honourable to them, and their fortitude was a credit to the English name."

At the end of the year 1705 a Mogul army approached within three days' march of the coast opposite Bombay. There were not then more than forty English soldiers to defend it, and the condition of the place was, if possible, more wretched than it had been a few years



earlier. Its story, up to the end of 1707, offers little diversity in this respect.

About this period, a person afterwards notable as father of the historian of India in the eighteenth century, Mr. Orme, arrived in India. It appears from the memoir of his son, attached to the *Historical Fragments*, that the elder Orme went out in 1706 as an adventurer, and was employed as a surgeon at Ajengo. He afterwards became chief of Ajengo; his second son, the great historian of a certain portion of Indian history, was born there.

However culpable the conduct of the agents and factors at Surat, native oppression was such as might have "driven wise men mad." Every annoyance that ignorance, insolence, and arrogance could offer was put upon the English. So much did they live in daily alarm for life and honour, that at the time the Emperor Aurungzebe died, Sir John Gayer, when he heard of it, dared not promulgate it, but communicated it in an allegory to the directors in London. Anderson, condensing the accounts in Bruce and Elphinstone, thus recounts the matter:—"He represented on the first of March, 1707, 'that the sun of this hemisphere had set, and that the star of the *second* magnitude, being under his meridian, had taken his place; but that it was feared the star of the first magnitude, though under a remoter meridian, would struggle to exalt itself'—in other words, that the emperor had died, that Prince Azim, his second son, had assumed the imperial title, and marched towards Delhi, and that Prince Alam or Moazim, the eldest son, was marching to dispute the throne with him. This actually occurred, and a great battle was fought near Agra in June, in which Prince Azim was killed. Moazim then became Emperor, with the title of Bahador Shah."

While the Mogul interest pressed heavily upon the English, the Mahrattas were scarcely less alarming in their menaces. Sevajee, the great chief, was dead; but so many daring adventurers rose up, pirates by sea or robbers by land, who called themselves Sevajee, that the name and functions of the man who combined so strangely the offices of prince, general, and bandit were perpetuated. Repeatedly, from 1703 to 1708, one Sevajee or another invested Surat, fired its suburbs, and compelled the Europeans to take extraordinary measures for defence. The Mahrattas hired Arab rovers, who attacked English ships, but were nearly always beaten by a fifth of their force. Pegu, with its teak forests, so admirably adapted for ship-building, was the chief place where these expeditions were fitted out, the king of that country favouring

the pirates. From the situation of Pegu, the Arabs were enabled to cruise at once into the Bay of Bengal and through the straits into the Archipelago, so that their ravages ranged from the Arabian Gulf to Japan. By sea and land the English and other Europeans were harassed by robbers. The Dutch alone successfully combated these great difficulties. They blockaded Swally, captured the Mogul's ships, and compelled him to redress their grievances.

Among the sea robbers whose acts were most infamous were various English, and one Hamilton (who afterwards lived in Scotland) perpetrated so many terrible outrages, that his ambition appeared to be to reach the uttermost verge of crime and cruelty.

A proclamation was sent from England, offering pardon to all pirates who surrendered and made confession, and rewards to all pirate crews who would deliver up their ships and commanders. Commodore Settleter arrived with this proclamation. It was soon proved that many who were supposed to be Arab cruisers were English, for this measure nearly put down piracy.

There can be no doubt that a general impression unfavourable to the honour and honesty of all Europeans had sprung up in the native mind, and the conduct of the strangers justified it. A moral influence of the most unfavourable nature was exercised by all the European nations upon the natives. Bruce, in his *Annals*, quotes a strange letter to this effect from President Pitt, who was grandfather of the great Earl of Chatham:—"When the Europeans first settled in India, they were mightily admired by the natives, believing they were as innocent as themselves; but since, by their example, they are grown very crafty and cautious, and no people better understand their own interest; so that it was easier to effect that in one year which you shan't do now in a century; and the more obliging your management, the more jealous they are of you." Like his great descendants, President Pitt was a man of extraordinary force of character, and a keen discriminator of men and things, but he took up a prejudice in favour of "native innocence" common in his day, the races inhabiting India having the address to conceal their motives, feelings, and opinions probably better than any other people in the world. The experience of the English, after a hundred years' knowledge of them, was not calculated to confirm an opinion of their simplicity or ingenuousness.

The sufferings of the British from native misrule at the close of the first decade of the century led to a deep impression that unless the native powers were made to fear Euro-



peans more, justice, or even exemption from greedy exaction and rigorous oppression, was not to be hoped for. The Rev. Mr. Anderson thus describes the injuries endured by the English at this period, and no writer has ever written more impartially of his countrymen, neither extenuating their errors nor unduly lauding their virtues:—"There was no power sufficient to protect the merchant either by land or sea. If he wished to convey his goods from Surat to Agra, he could only hope to defend them against plunderers by mustering a strong party, and setting regular guards at each camping place, as though he were in an enemy's country. Even then he might be overpowered by the free lances of Hindostan. Still more dangerous were the paths of the ocean. There he must entirely depend upon his own resources, for it would be vain to seek protection from the law. Nay, the proud emperor appealed to the despised strangers that his shipping might be protected, and they were expected not only to defend themselves, but also the mariners and traders of a vast empire. Yet he and his subjects, helpless haughty barbarians, affected to despise the English, wronged them incessantly, imprisoned their chiefs, insulted their envoys, fleeced their merchants, and drove them to turn upon their oppressors in despair. Thus the evils of native rule compelled English merchants to protect their warehouses with battlements and all the muniments of war. Then, as they still suffered injuries, the facility with which they managed to defend themselves suggested defensive operations, and led to territorial aggrandizement. Politicians think, or rather say, that because it is an age of commerce it cannot be an age of conquest. But the fact is, the necessities of commerce throw open the door to conquest, and the defence of their trade first suggested to the English a policy which ended in the subjugation of India. Short as this history is up to this point, it yet seems a labyrinth of human follies and errors. Religion, however, which is the only solid basis of all knowledge, enables us to trace through it all a mysterious clue of divine providence and divine direction. European vices and native vices bear an overwhelming proportion on the record, and the catalogue is relieved by few items of virtue. But as two negations make an affirmative, so the vices of Europeans and natives have produced a positive good. The thirst for riches, the unscrupulous efforts of ambition, the reckless violence which often struck Hindoos with terror—all these were the disgrace of the English, but yet they hurried them on to empire. The perfidy, the cunning which overreached itself, the cowardice, the exclu-

sive bigotry, which disgraced the natives, smoothed the way to their subjection; and surely these two results are being directed by the Universal Benefactor to good. We know of no other way in which India could have been regenerated. Had the English in India been a set of peaceful saintly emigrants, what impression would they have made upon the country? Had the natives placed confidence in each other, and been united under a common faith, how could they have given way to the encroachments of a few foreigners?"

Much that would otherwise be unaccountable in the condition of the English in India during the early part of the eighteenth century, becomes explicable by a knowledge of the apathy which prevailed in England in reference to India and Englishmen there. The merchants discussed keenly the profits and prospects of trade in the East, but the statesmen, professional men, litterateurs, men about town, the middle classes, &c., took no notice of it, and hardly knew what their fellow-citizens in the East either achieved or suffered. The accounts sent home to the directors were kept to themselves, or to some extent made known in open court, and the people at large knew and cared nothing about India. English authors in either the seventeenth or early part of the eighteenth century seldom refer to India, still less to their countrymen within its precincts. Butler and Dryden do refer to Gujerat—barely refer to it: Evelyn, Pepys, and a few others were accustomed to go into the city to ascertain the quotations of India stock. From 1708 to 1740, India is hardly named by any author whose works have come down to us. Indeed, there is a singular deficiency as to the authorities for this portion of Indian history. Few have written at all concerning it; existing documents are meagre; no period of the history of India, as to British interests and transactions, is so barren of recorded incident. The documents that are extant chiefly relate to Western India.

At the close of 1708, the company, under the stringent necessity of economy, had withdrawn their factories from the following places on the western coast of India; namely, from Cutch, Brodera, Raibagh, Rajapore, Batticolo, Onore, Barselore, Mangalore, Dhurmapatam, Cananore, Paniani, Cranganore, Cochin, Porca, Carnopoly, and Quilon,—all of them small establishments, in which probably the only European residents were a factor, and a writer, who served him as assistant. But they retained their principal fort on the island of Bombay, besides smaller forts at Mazagon, Mahim, Sion, Sewree and Worlee; forts and factories also at Carwar, Tellicherry, Ajengo, and Calicut; and factories at Surat, Swally,



Broach, Ahmedabad, to which was afterwards added a residency at Cambay.\*

The operations of the Ostend Company not only gave uneasiness to the East India Company in London during the next dozen years, but the arrival of their ships in India created quite a sensation; and no manner of falsehood, fraud, and violence was left untried by English, Dutch, Portuguese, and French to prevent them from trading. In another chapter the formation and history of this company were sketched; it is here pertinent only to say that its attention was less directed to Western India than to other Asiatic fields of commerce.

The correspondence of this early portion of the century discloses a number of singular terms and phrases now unknown, but then belonging to the vocabulary of Indian trade, such as "Brauels, chelloes, dutties, geinea stuffs, perpetts, scarlet drabs, lungees, tapseils, meeances, &c." Calico, indigo, rice, sword-blades, hardware, muskets, saltpetre, powder, are words continually occurring; the names of spices much less frequently than formerly, but tea was written oftener as the century waxed older.

In 1715 the population of Bombay Island was sixteen thousand.† It is remarkable that at that date a great change had taken place in the sanitary influences of the locality, so that Mr. Cobb considered an Englishman might live with nearly as good health there as anywhere, if he adapted himself to the climate. The year 1716 was signalized by the inhabitants generally, but more especially the merchants, voluntarily consenting to increased taxation, in order to put Bombay in a better state of defence. Many years ago an inscription was removed from the Apollo gateway, which conveyed the information that the town wall was completed that year, Charles Boone being governor. This man was an accomplished scholar and a good man.‡

The year 1718 saw another important change at Bombay. The company resigned their feudal claims upon the landowners, on condition that a tax should be imposed upon all who resided within the town wall.|| From 1712 to 1720 a taste for antiquities prevailed, and efforts were made by various learned and industrious persons to examine and describe the caves of Elephanta, so deeply interesting to the antiquary. These efforts

\* Macpherson's *History of Commerce*. Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*.

† Rev. Richard Cobb's *Account of Bombay*.

‡ *A New Account of the East Indies*, being observations and remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, who spent his time there, from 1688 to 1723. Edinburgh, 1727.

|| *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society*.

have been pithily summed up by an able reviewer in the following brief account:—"A taste for Indian antiquities was now exhibited for the first time, and we note the observations of two gentlemen at Elephanta, as they show the gradual dawn of knowledge, and preserve the memory of some monuments which time and the ruthless hands of barbarians have since destroyed. Captain Pyke, who then commanded an East Indiaman, and was afterwards governor of St. Helena, went in 1712 to explore the caves—an enterprise attended both with difficulty and danger; for intelligent guides were not easily found, and the cruisers of Kanhojee Angria were constantly on the look out, ready to pounce upon and kidnap any Europeans who might come within their reach. As Pyke and his party approached the island, they took for a landmark the figure of an elephant sculptured in stone, with a small elephant upon its back, the greater part of which has now disappeared; and a little further on was another statue, called 'Alexander's Horse,' of which there are now no traces. The explorers speculated on the origin of the subterranean temple, which has since exercised so much the fancy of imaginative and the judgment of learned persons, and deciding against the claims of Alexander the Great, leaned to the conclusion of Linschoten, who, in his *Voyages to India*, pronounced them to be the work of Chinese merchants. The smaller caves they found to be used by the Portuguese for cow-houses, and an aristocratic Vandal of that race had been amusing himself by firing a cannon in them and destroying the images. Captain Pyke made faithful sketches of the various figures, which were afterwards engraved and published by the Society of Antiquaries. George Bowcher, formerly a servant of the old, then of the new company, and afterwards residing for many years as a free merchant at Surat, devoted his attention to the literary monuments of the Parsees, and in 1718 procured from them the *Vendidad Sade*, which in 1723 was sent to Europe, where it remained for long as an enigma, oriental scholars not being able even to decipher its characters. Governor Boone also had drawings made of the figures in the caves of Elephanta, and a descriptive account written. He was clearly a man of elegant and refined mind, who loved classical and antiquarian studies; and a Latin inscription placed by him over the Apollo Gate of the fort, as well as one on a bell which he presented to the new church, exhibit him as tinged with some knowledge of Roman and mediæval antiquities."

The erection of a church in Bombay, which



afterwards became the cathedral, was one of the improvements of the early part of the eighteenth century. At that time the English much neglected their ministers, and they alone of all Europeans who settled in India built no churches. Some writers complain that when the great men of the English factories gave banquets, the Roman Catholic priest always had the place of honour at table conferred upon him, and the clergyman of the Dutch church the next, but the English clergyman occupied a low place, his inferiority in the esteem of his host being thus strongly marked, and as tamely acquiesced in by the object of this disrespect. The church was completed in 1718, the steeple at a subsequent period. The consecration was very imposing; "Ramajee" and all his caste, with a crowd of natives, being spectators, who, with the courtesy characteristic of them, stood the whole time. The governor, council, and ladies retired after service to the vestry, and "drank success to the new church in a glass of sack." The day was one of great rejoicing. The conduct of the chaplain throughout these proceedings was full of zeal, and marked by wisdom, goodness, and prudence. That the fabric might be maintained, a "new customs duty was levied upon imported merchandise." Mr. Cobb, the chaplain, was not satisfied with building a church, he spared neither rich nor powerful in his sermons, but with a stern fidelity insisted upon all, even to the governor and council, conforming to the requirements of Christianity. On one occasion he refused the communion of the Lord's Supper to a member of the council, notoriously a violator of the decalogue, and for this, and for his public rebukes of the sins of the high officials, which was called "political preaching," he was suspended by the governor and council. Fifty-two years after the ungrateful and cruel treatment he received, he published his book upon Bombay. Soon after the church was completed, a joint-stock bank was established, but its history, so far as can be gathered, was nearly identical with those which of late years have carried so much destruction and sorrow through English society. The chief direction was in the hands of the council, but that circumstance did not afford safety. Sums were lent without security, and were never repaid, and business was conducted on unsound principles. The want of success in establishing a suitable bank was a great evil, as it was much required, and would have met with the support of the wealthy natives.

The administration of justice was truly horrible: the natives exposed themselves to punishment by their treachery and treason,

for some of the wealthiest among them were constantly in correspondence with the enemies of the English, instigated partly by love of gain, partly by sympathy with any native party, however bad, when opposed to the foreigners, often by religious bigotry, and not unfrequently from a settled antipathy to English laws and their administration. Conspiracies among the natives to ruin one another by legal processes were tempted by the condition of English law, and its uncertain action, and this temptation was largely yielded to. The English government on some occasions resorted to torture to extort confession from alleged criminals. Witchcraft was believed by the highest functionaries, and laws administered founded on the belief. Sometimes when natives were accused, and condemned on false evidence, and their innocence was subsequently demonstrated, they were *pardoned*, and received some slight pension in lieu of their confiscated property. The government of the English in Bombay during the first half of the eighteenth century was as essentially unjust as the character of those entrusted with it was demoralised. The punishments for witchcraft were flogging (this was inflicted on women) *at the church door*, and *penance in church*.

The civil administration of the military department was the worst possible. Robbery in every form was perpetrated upon the soldiery by purveyors and others, almost with impunity. The exposures at home, in this latter half of the nineteenth century, of the wrongs perpetrated upon the British soldier, are horrible and surprising, but fall far short of those endured, without redress, by the men serving at Bombay, natives and British. The contempt entertained for the natives was often displayed in a manner transparent and absurd, the governor and council often exposing themselves, by their mean tricks and low artifices, to the contempt of the natives in return. The following entry appears in the diary of the proceedings of the council of Bombay, May 22nd, 1724:—"There being four horses in the stables, altogether unserviceable, and if offered for sale not likely to fetch anything, the president proposes presenting them to four of the most considerable Banian merchants on the island, which may be courteously taken; and to render them the more acceptable, offers the dressing of them with a yard and a half of red cloth; which the board agreeing to, the warehouse-keeper is hereby directed to issue out six yards for that purpose, to be presented on his majesty's birthday, the 28th instant." The native merchants and capitalists of



Bombay knew a good horse as well as "their masters," and must have been amused at the trick, while they despised the meanness of those who resorted to it.

As the century advanced, the dangers to which the English in Western India were exposed thickened. The breaking up of the Mogul empire brought novel perils to them, for when they had nothing to apprehend from that fading power, new authorities started into existence everywhere, and each was a danger to the Europeans. In 1720 the chief and council of Surat wrote home a graphic description of the *disjecta membra* of the old Mogul empire, and the especial alarm which each of these occasioned to the English interests. Several of the usurping authorities had fleets, which they chiefly used for purposes of piracy.

Kanhojee Angria, a Mahratta (Maratha) chief aspiring to royalty, was the principal sea pirate amongst the native competitors for dominion. He fixed his head-quarters in a strong fortress of the province of Bejapore, which was called both Gheria and Viziadroog. This place was built upon a rocky site, on a promontory of the Concan, about eighty-two miles north of Goa. The whole coast, nearly from Goa to Bombay, was under the control of this piratical chief, and in every bay and creek he had vessels or a fortress. In 1717 the rovers of this sea king captured the English ship *Success*. The company declared war, in retaliation for this outrage, hoping soon to reduce the robber chief to the necessity of seeking terms. His resources were, however, underrated by the English, and for more than thirty-seven years the war continued. This may be readily believed from the mode of warfare adopted by Angria. His fleet was composed of grabs and gallivats, varying from 150 to 200 tons burthen. The grabs carried broadsides of six and nine pounder guns, and on their main decks were mounted two nine or twelve pounders, pointed forwards through port-holes cut in the bulkheads, and designed to be fired over the bows. The gallivats carried light guns fixed on swivels; some also mounted six or eight pieces of cannon, from two to four pounders, and all were impelled by forty or fifty stout oars. Eight or ten of these grabs and forty or fifty gallivats, crowded with men, formed the whole fleet, and with smaller numbers their officers often ventured to attack armed ships of considerable burthen. The plan of their assault was this:—Observing from their anchorage in some secure bay that a vessel was in the offing, they would slip their cables and put out to sea, sailing swiftly if there were a breeze, but if not, making the gallivats

take the grabs in tow. When within shot, they generally assembled as soon as they could astern of their victim, firing into her rigging until they had succeeded in disabling her. They would then approach nearer and batter her on all sides until she struck; or, if she still defended herself resolutely, a number of gallivats, having two or three hundred men on each, would close with her, and the crews, sword in hand, board her from all quarters.\* In 1719 an attempt was made to surprise Cavery, a fortified place in possession of this pirate king. The garrison was apprised of the intention, and the plan was defeated. One Ranea Kamattee, a native of rank in Bombay, was tried and convicted for the offence; but as the evidence against him was extorted by torture, the governor himself having in private applied the thumb-screw, little credit was given to the judgment, which was ultimately reversed, facts having come to light which brought home the treachery to certain Portuguese in the English service, who, to screen themselves, forged documents to convict the unfortunate Kamattee, who, no doubt, wished well to the cause of any native power opposed to the English, although innocent of the particular act of treason for which his property was confiscated and his person imprisoned.

In 1720 four of the piratical grabs and ten gallivats captured the English ship *Charlotte*, and brought her a prize into Gheria. The English at length determined to attack Gheria itself: a fleet, with strong detachments of troops on board, the whole under the command of one Walter Brown, was dispatched against the stronghold of the enemy. At the outset Mr. Brown encountered an unlooked for difficulty. The natives were unwilling to supply provisions for the fleet, and raised an outcry because some cattle were slaughtered to provide the ships with beef; their belief in metempsychosis being outraged by such an act.

Walter Brown at last set sail, and reached, unopposed, the entrance of the river upon which Gheria was situated, where he landed his soldiers, an operation which the enemy appears to have permitted without attack; but no sooner were they disembarked and prepared to march, than they were assailed; but their assailants were defeated. The enemy, however, hovered around the small party of British, resisting their progress step by step, but always without success. On one occasion, a platoon of Angria's soldiers gallantly held the ground until within "range of partridge shot," as the records of the event express it, when a discharge of that missile

\* Orme's *History of Hindostan*, book v.



killed half their number: several of the English were at the same time killed by the bursting of a gun. The enemy still retired, until they obtained the shelter of their fort.

While the troops were thus engaged the fleet was also actively employed, sixteen of the piratical craft were destroyed, and the fort cannonaded, but the ships' guns made no impression upon its strength. Finding that the fortifications were impregnable, Mr. Brown drew off his ships and re-embarked his troops.

The English were struck by the skill and bravery of the enemy, and the latter were no less impressed by the dash and strength of their adversaries. Certain Portuguese auxiliaries to the British behaved badly in this affair, and were taunted for their cowardice by letters from Angria himself. The Governor of Bombay made celebration of the victory on the return of the expedition, and Angria wrote to him jeeringly for rejoicing over the flight of his forces, for he (Angria) still remained ready to defeat again English or Portuguese, or both combined.

It appears, from the obscure records of this period, that the Dutch had made an attack previous to that of the English, and with results in all respects similar.

Angria proposed terms of peace to Governor Phipps, of Bombay, soon after these events, but the governor refused to treat until the European prisoners held by the Mahratta were given up. The correspondence between the governor and Angria is singularly interesting, and as, on the whole, the rude Mahratta had had the advantage in war, so had he also in argument, and especially in that description of reply which insinuates the *tu quoque*. The editor of the *Bombay Quarterly* has ingeniously, and also ingenuously, compared the productions of these eminent correspondents, and given its gist in the following comment:—"We can now smile at the wise saws and edifying proverbs with which his (Angria's) epistles are garnished; but at that time they must have been gall and wormwood to his correspondents. He condescended to make proposals of peace, but Governor Phipps, in reply, refused to treat until his European prisoners were released. Angria then sent the following rejoinder:—Recapitulating with the utmost exactness the subjects contained in the letter which he had received, he observes how his excellency reminds him that he (Angria) is solely responsible for their disputes; that the desire of possessing what is another's is a thing very wide of reason; that such insults are a sort of piracy; that if he had only cultivated trade, his port might have vied with the great port of Surat; that those who are least expert in

war suffer by it; that he who follows it merely from love for it will find cause to repent; and, lastly, his excellency refuses to treat for peace until all prisoners are restored. All these matters are then passed under review by Kanhojee, who meets his correspondent's arguments with subtlety and skill in repartee. He delicately hints that the English merchants have also a desire of possessing what is another's, and are not exempt from 'this sort of ambition, for this is the way of the world.' It was incorrect to say that his government was supported by piracy; it had been established by the Maharaja Sevajec, after he had conquered four kingdoms. If his port were not equal to Surat, it was not for want of indulgence shown to merchants. As for their appeal to the sword, there had been losses on both sides, and it was true that such as love war will find cause to repent, 'of which,' he slyly insinuates, 'I suppose your excellency hath found proof; for we are not always victorious, nor always fortunate.' He concludes by an assurance that he will agree to an exchange of prisoners; that if the governor really desire peace, he is quite ready to meet him half way; and adds, 'as your excellency is a man of understanding, I need say no more.' " \*

In 1722 the English sent an expedition against "Angria Colaba." This was commanded by Commodore Matthews, and consisted of three ships; the troops being chiefly Portuguese. This enterprise failed utterly, the Portuguese being once more unfaithful.

The Dutch, with a far superior fleet to any yet sent against the Mahrattas, were defeated in attempts to bombard and storm the fortifications of Gheria in 1724. The repulse of the Batavians was destructive and signal. Angria was a man of a high order of courage, great naval and military skill, so far as military and naval science was then understood, and of an original genius.

The English suffered very much from other pirates even while engaged in fierce struggle with Angria. The Sauganians had troubled the merchants from the beginning of the century, and continued to do so, more or less, until the first forty years of it had passed. They were particularly active while the Europeans were concentrating their attention in a warlike way against Angria. One of the fiercest battles which took place was between the English merchant ship *Morning Star* and a fleet of five ships manned with two thousand men. According to the English account,\* there were only seventeen fighting men on

\* *A Chapter in the History of Bombay*

† *Consultation Book of the Bombay Government*, 6th Sept. 1720.



board the *Morning Star*. There were, however, a considerable number of other men, as she was a large ship. Twenty-six native merchants and one native seaman went on board the enemy's fleet, according to the accounts—which are given with some plausibility—for the purpose of dissuading the pirates from their purpose.\* It might be supposed that one or two of these natives to each ship of the enemy would have been sufficient for negotiatory purposes, and that the rest had proved themselves more loyal in standing by the guns of the *Morning Star*. After a series of attacks upon the British ship, during which she was twice boarded, and three times set on fire, her captain and crew all wounded, several mortally, the *Star*, by the good seamanship with which she was worked, contrived to leave the enemy's fleet entangled with one another in such confusion, during the last effort to board her, that she was enabled to escape to Bombay. The native merchants were ransomed, and the commander of the piratical squadron hanged by order of his superior, for allowing a few Englishmen to repel so great a force.† The accounts of these transactions handed down to us are incredible, a few wounded men are represented as repelling thousands, even when a footing was gained upon the deck of the ship they defended. If these representations be correct, there is nothing in the naval history of England comparable for valour, skill, and fortune, to the exploit of the *Morning Star*.

Another combat of an English ship with Madagascar pirates, or pirates who had made that island their haunt, partakes of as much of the marvellous as the conflict just related; for, although not presenting scenes of such wonderful heroism and strength, the address of a certain captain surpassed that which we read of in any other authentic story of sea-fights with pirates. This narrative comes down to us chiefly on the authority of Alexander Hamilton.‡ Three ships, two British and one belonging to the Ostend Company, now (as was seen in another chapter) come into notoriety and activity, were lying at anchor off the island of Madagascar. Two Dutch-built pirates attacked them. Being fitted exclusively for war, the two vessels were more than a match for the three merchantmen. The Ostender made sail, followed by the British ship *Greenwich*, and escaped. They seem to have left their companion in danger, in a shabby way, for she made fight, but ran by accident on some rocks, pursued

by the lesser pirate ship, the larger having given chase to the two successful fugitives. The pirate in pursuit of the *Cassandra* also went upon the rocks, while seeking to board her expected prize; the positions of the two ships were favourable to the *Cassandra*, which raked the pirate's decks, killing or driving the crew below. Affairs were in this attitude when the other piratical ship returned from her unsuccessful chase, and sped to the assistance of her consort. The English captain manned his boats, and gained a position in shoal water, where he could not be pursued. According to the story transmitted to us he had the hardihood to offer or ask truce, and go on board the pirate, where his persuasive powers were such that he succeeded in gaining immunity, and even a *present of the ship whose guns he had silenced*, his own having become a wreck. There is nothing in the relation of this transaction to justify the assertion that the English merchant captain was able to give proof that he had pursued the same calling, thereby exciting a fellow-feeling, a suspicion which might be fairly entertained from the cordiality with which he was treated when he and his late assailants came to understand one another. At all events, when he reached Bombay he was feted, and as Captain Massey, who signalized himself at the Redan in the Crimean war of 1854-5, remarked, "had the inconvenience of being made a hero." The generosity of the pirates was not, however, appreciated at Bombay, for an expedition was fitted out against them, under Commodore Matthews, who met with no better success than he had obtained at Angria Colaba.

The perfidy of the Portuguese had ever been a source of anxiety at Bombay. There were at least 6000 Portuguese there who professed loyalty, but were seditious to a man. The people would probably have fallen in with English interests, and become identified with the prosperity of a government which it was not possible to disturb, but the Jesuit portion of the clergy—and nearly all were of that order—irritated the public feeling perpetually, and kept alive a hatred to the English, impotent, except to torment, but often bringing disastrous consequences to the Portuguese themselves. The English endured these things with much toleration, for there had existed a considerable sympathy with Romanism on the part of many of the officials and writers who professed Protestantism. The annoyances offered by the constant enmity and treasons of "the Portugals" became at last unbearable, and the president and council took the matter into serious deliberation. The mode of securing some

\* *Diaries of the Bombay and Surat Governments.*

† Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas.*

‡ *New Account of the East Indies.* By Alexander Hamilton.



loyalty from the Portuguese subjects, which the officers of the company hit upon, was the assumption of the ecclesiastical patronage of the Roman Catholic churches. This had previously been in the hands of the King of Portugal, who, by that means, was enabled to possess himself of precise information as to English affairs at Bombay, and to disturb its government whenever he pleased. This power he more effectually secured by giving the people of the parishes a *veto* upon his patronage. The council determined to seize this patronage, and so to administer it that none but clergymen of reputed loyalty should exercise pastoral functions among the Roman Catholics of the island. The East India Company approved of the policy of their Bombay subordinates. The measure was carried out, no clergyman being allowed to officiate at the altar until he took an oath of allegiance to the king of England—an oath not to preach against the civil rights of the East India Company, and an oath to submit in civil matters to its orders. The priests resisting, the churches were transferred to clergymen of the Carmelite mission, under the superintendence of Don Frey Mauritio, who held authority direct from the propaganda at Rome. The Don entered upon his episcopal functions with no good will from the Portuguese clergy. He and his Carmelites took the following oath:—"I, Don Frey Manritio, of Sancta Teresa, Bishop of Anastatipolis, vicar-general in the empire of the Great Mogul, of the Island of Bombay and the jurisdiction thereof, do swear upon the holy evangelist (on which I have placed my right hand) entirely to obey His Most Serene Majesty of Great Britain, and that I will never, directly or indirectly, teach, preach, or practise anything contrary to the honour and dignity of the crown of his said Most Serene Majesty, or to the interest of the Right Honourable English Company, and that I will pay all obedience to the orders of the Honourable the Governor for the time being, and to exercise the Roman Catholic religion according to its primitive institution, without any alteration. In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand this 6th day of May, 1720." Padre Frey Pedro, of the most Holy Trinity, and Frey Elizel de St. Joseph took and subscribed the same oath.

This oath was taken in October, 1719. As soon as the ceremony was over, proclamation was made by the governor and council, requiring "all inhabitants of the Roman Catholic religion to pay the same obedience to the bishop, Don Frey Mauritio de Sancta Teresa, and the priests appointed by him, as they formerly did to the Portuguese bishop and

priefts." The Rev. Don remained in his episcopate until his death in 1726, when he was succeeded by "Peter of Alcantara, called Bishop of Areopolis, in Asia Minor, and apostolic vicar of the Mogul Empire, the kingdom of Isdal Khan, Golconda, and the Island of Bombay." As soon as the proclamation was issued, recognising Don Mauritio in the episcopate, the Portuguese priests received notice to quit the island in twenty-four hours, an order which was enforced.

It was expected by some in the English interest, favourable to the policy adopted, that a schism would arise, by which the Roman Catholic party must be weakened. The ultimate result justified such speculations in some degree, for ecclesiastical disunions among the Roman Catholics of Bombay, dependent upon claims of episcopal jurisdiction, sometimes arising before the courts of law, have long troubled that community. The immediate result was not in accordance with these expectations, for the people refused to discuss the matter, and looked on with apparent indifference, although they felt many misgivings and much disapprobation. In the governments of "the general of the North," as the Portuguese chief officer was styled who controlled the factories in Bassein, Diu, Damaun, &c., &c., the Portuguese clergy offered strong remonstrances; but the people were quiet, as it is probable they were advised, under the circumstances, to be. The measure did not eradicate the ill-will entertained towards the English as heretics and supplanters. There was a change of policy on the part of the Roman clergy, but no change of feeling, except that the new clergy did not regard the English from a national, as they did in a religious point of view, with such keen hatred. Still there existed a repugnance towards the English, which, whether ethnological or circumstantial, showed itself when events called it forth, so that the Roman Catholics of Bombay were esteemed by the English undesirable subjects.

The expelled priests, in concert with the people who had appeared so passive, and probably with the knowledge and concurrence even of the new clergy, made representations to the King of Portugal, to whom they really held allegiance. These were forwarded to the English court, and increased the distrust and dislike with which the Portuguese at Bombay were regarded by the company. What advice arrived from Portugal to the Portuguese descendants in India it is difficult to say, but the representative of that government in the north of Western India proceeded to extremities, prohibiting all communication with Bombay until the expelled priests were



restored; he interdicted also the transport of provisions, and seized English vessels when opportunity was afforded. The English were not likely to allow of these affronts without retaliation, they accordingly proclaimed that all "Portugals" holding property in Bombay who were absent from the island, who did not return in twenty-one days, would be considered rebels, and their property would be confiscated. The absentees did not appear, and the property was seized.

This proclamation was conveyed from Bombay to Salsette by two passengers; the Portuguese placed them in irons and carried them about, as little boys in England on the 5th of November carry effigies of Guy Faux. The mock triumph was first exhibited in Tanna, then in Bandora, where they were hoisted on a gibbet, but were taken down again and sent back to Bombay bruised, torn, and exhausted, after experiencing almost every form of insult and coarse indignity.

The English promptly accepted this as a declaration of war, the long negotiations of modern times not being then fashionable with Englishmen in the East. A detachment of soldiers marched to the Straits of Makin, and shelled the fortified church of Bandora. The Portuguese, who were disposed to defend it, were speedily put *hors de combat*, and the terrified inhabitants begged for mercy; this was granted without any exaction but a promise to abstain from injuring defenceless Englishmen. This pledge was given by people, clergy, and civil officers, accompanied by the warmest expressions of regret for conduct which could not be justified among nations practising humanity, or honourable in war. After exchanges of courtesies, the English withdrew, and the Portuguese immediately prepared to strengthen the place, so as to be enabled to perpetrate fresh acts of cowardice and brutality with tolerable prospect of impunity. New and more cowardly injuries on unarmed Englishmen and peaceful coasting boats followed. The English again appeared, again shelled the church, and after slaying many, and filling the place with consternation, responded to a renewed cry for mercy by renewed generosity and forbearance. After this, except by the private assassination of Englishmen, no further outrages were committed.

In the year 1706 a "savage pirate" had captured an English ship called the *Monsoon*. A Portuguese frigate conquered the pirate, and retook the prize, but instead of giving it to the owners, as the ostensible peace between the two nations and the requirements of humanity would have enjoined, the Portuguese war ships proved as dishonest as the

pirate, and kept the prize. The facts of the case did not become known to the English for years after, and then other troubles prevented action from being taken in the matter. In 1715 the English were disposed to revive the memories of old injuries, and sent the Worshipful Stephen Strutt, deputy governor of Bombay, to demand reparation from the viceroy of Goa. He was also commissioned to visit the factories south of Bombay, such as Carwar, Tellicherry, Calicut, and Ajengo, to inquire into the systematic and extensive frauds practised there by the company's own agents. He did not embark on these errands until October, 1716, just a year and a day after his commission to do so was signed. His squadron consisted of but two ships, and he had scarcely passed Malwa, when he was attacked by the Mahrattas, a grab and a gallivat attempting, with astonishing intrepidity and much skill, to cut off a valuable ship which accompanied the commissioner. Although the rovers were beaten off, they managed to escape unhurt in either man or ship. Such, however, were the perils which, about a century and three-quarters ago, attended a cruise along the southern Bombay coasts.

Arriving off Carwar, his worship found a Portuguese squadron of considerable power stationed there to protect the coast from pirates, which task their crews were too cowardly to perform, while they robbed every merchantman whose confidence they invited and betrayed. These rogues would, no doubt, have attacked the English commissioner had they not been deterred by their fears.

His worship landed at the different factories, creating consternation when the objects of his mission became known. He acted with moderation and judgment, rectifying, at all events *pro tempore*, many abuses, dismissing dishonest servants, and promoting those of good repute. At Goa his worship hired a priest to be the advocate of the proprietors of the English ships, but his eloquence was as little potent as the viceroy's honest efforts, and all reparation for the affair of the *Monsoon* was, in polite but firm terms, refused.

It does not appear that the English took any measures for the recovery of damages for the *Monsoon*. Whenever their affairs fell into very great hands—like these of the Worshipful Mr. Strutt—a compromise of some sort, a diplomatic defeat, or a humiliation, mostly resulted: whenever the general community of the English anywhere took up a matter, it was usually carried out with daring courage, promptitude, and corresponding success.

The state of the factories south of Bombay,



at that time, is disclosed by the reports of this voyage of Mr. Strutt. Carwar he found fortified, the Mogul having robbed it some time previously. The Dessaree, the rajah of the neighbouring country, invaded Carwar in 1718, and besieged it for two months; but succour arriving from Bombay, he was obliged to raise the siege, but not until after many perils to the garrison, and those who came to their assistance. The troops sent from Bombay could with difficulty be landed in consequence of the high surf. The first attempt was unfortunate,—eighty men were either killed, drowned, or fell into the hands of the enemy. When the second attempt was successful, a pause in the operations on both sides was made, which lasted for six weeks. Four hundred men then attacked the enemy, covered by the guns of the small craft, and the Dessaree received a severe chastisement, leaving two hundred men upon the field. One hundred and fifty Arabian horses, which had arrived for the Dessaree, were captured, and a number of his coasting craft. The enemy returned and hovered about Carwar, no action taking place until a large force, arriving from Bombay, of 2280 men were landed. The enemy began to retreat; the English officers, instead of offering hot pursuit, practised a variety of manœuvres remarkable only for military pedantry and professional folly. This conduct encouraged the enemy, who, at first, puzzled by what they had never before seen, at last supposed that what was performed from sheer conceit of military tactics resulted from fear, and consequently rallied and charged. What followed is only told by a prejudiced witness, Alexander Hamilton. He declares that the English commander ran away, and threw off his uniform to render his flight more successful. The other officers, whose tactics were so pompous and scientific, followed the example of their superiors, and the men, without officers, were assailed with such advantage as speedily left two hundred and fifty of them dead upon the field. They would all have been driven into the sea, but that their flight was covered by the guns of the floating batteries, which had been prepared to cover the landing.

According to the testimony of Hamilton, the English made no efforts to retrieve their dishonour, but acted on the defensive, although the total number of the Dessaree's forces was only 7000. His finances at length failing, he drew off his army, leaving the English unmolested, but entertaining contempt for their capacity and courage. The grand subject of difference between this chief and Taylor, the head of the English factory, was

the right to the spoils of such ships as were thrown upon the coasts. Both these persons were "wreckers;" the Dessaree considered that he had a natural and inherited right to rob shipwrecked mariners of all nations, and the English chief considered that he might as well take the right of plundering the unfortunate of all nations in such circumstances, excepting, of course, those of his own. This contest might be called the war of the wreckers. The company were obliged to withdraw the factory, for the native hostility and contempt were irreconcilable, and the English there had lost all moral power. What reverses the British experienced; how frequently their capacity proved deficient; what general mediocrity was displayed by them on land! How marvellous that the company still extended its power, although all its branches and the parent stem were violently subjected to the rudest blasts of adversity: as the oak which is most fiercely shaken by storms, takes the deepest root in the soil where it is planted.

Calicut had been one of the oldest stations of the Europeans in India. The English were prospering there; but in 1714 the Dutch seized some land, which they declared had been assigned to them by compact with a former rajah, and began to build a fort. The English were anxious to have them removed before the fort was finished, but did not dare to attack them openly. They intrigued with the rajah, who, like the English themselves, in this case preferred a treacherous and underhand course to open and manly hostilities. By a base, cowardly, and perfidious scheme, the Dutch were attacked, and many assassinated; but they soon returned, exacting heavy vengeance, and re-establishing themselves with sufficient solidity. From that day English interests at Calicut rapidly declined; they were unable to compete with the Dutch as traders, and the whole of the business which they had conducted was, by the fair competition of men of superior business capacity, withdrawn from them. The Dutch were too well prepared, and knew how to defend themselves too well, for any attempt to rob them by force of their well-earned success; so the English removed to Tellicherry, leaving a Portuguese interpreter behind as their only representative.

Tellicherry was one of the ports earliest occupied by the French, the account of whose rise and fall in India belongs to other chapters. At this period their name was somewhat important in Western India, although that was not the region where their power was developed. When at Tellicherry they erected a mud fort, and as it has been the fate of Frenchmen to found foreign settlements,



and build fortifications for Englishmen to gain possession of in some way, so was it at Tellicherry. The old mud fort of the French became English property in 1708, the principal Nair of the place claiming the right to dispose of it, and choosing, for purposes of his own, to make it the property of the English. They erected a stone fortification upon the site of the mud-built defences, and it always turned out in India that where they fixed themselves resolutely, no power was able to extirpate them, except in some season when accident performed what force otherwise would have failed to achieve. A mania for building seized the English at Tellicherry; they "fixed" their capital in walls and batteries, and soon experienced the usual inconvenience in all matters of a purely commercial nature.

According to that indefatigable asperser of his countrymen, if engaged in the company's service, Alexander Hamilton, the garrison were drunken and dissolute; the officers not only setting a horrible example, but in the most tyrannous manner compelling the men to drink, that they might themselves profit by the sale of "peneel." Thus the meanness with which most writers charge the English traders of this period settled in India, was quite as signally shown, and more culpably practised, by "officers and gentlemen." Disturbances soon ensued between the native authorities and the English. The former endavouring to exact exorbitant duties, the latter setting the tariff of the "Nair" at defiance. Mutual bitterness often issued in blows, and these conflicts continued for a long time.

The calamities of the English in Western India were very numerous in the first quarter of the eighteenth century—the massacre of Ajengo is one of the most unhappy illustrations of this remark. A dispute arose, as usual, about duties or tribute; the English appealed to the Ranee, and went in a body to her highness's palace: \* they were waylaid and most of them massacred. The English imagined they saw the hand of the Dutch in this, as they did in most transactions that were adverse to them; but the latter published a strong and ardent protestation of innocence, and an indignant denunciation of "the detestable massacre."

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century Western India began to feel the influence of events connected with British interests in Bengal. Thus the factory was altogether removed from Surat in 1712, in consequence of the robbery and oppressions

of the native governors of that place, and for three years the English trade was stopped there; but in consequence of an embassy sent from Hoogly to the Mogul, matters were arranged, and the factors returned. This was in 1716, and as a result of the success of the Hoogly embassy, the agents were allowed to attach fifteen acres of ground to the factory. Thus, territorially, the English illustrated the Spanish proverb, "Give me room to sit down, and I will make myself room to lie down."

The firman of the emperor resulting from the Hoogly embassy was favourable and just. Seldom has a public document been drawn up with more skill and honesty. The framers, and the emperor for whom it was prepared, were actuated by a sincere desire, not only to avoid complications in future, but so to provide against them as to render them almost impossible, while his imperial authority was respected. Yet it did not long secure the English from grosser outrages than ever. As the latter have been accused of not acting upon the law as laid down in this firman, the document is given to the reader, who must be convinced that the interests of the English lay so strongly in a just compliance with the treaty, that they never would give any occasion for its violation. The following translation of the firman from the Persian was made by Mr. Fraser, one of the factors, and entered in the records:—

"Governors, Aumils, Jagheerdars, Foujdars, Crorics, Rhadars, Goujirbans, and Zemindars who are at present, and shall be hereafter in the Soubah of Ahmedabad and the fortunate port of Surat and Cambay being in hopes of the royal favour,—Know that at this time of conquest, which carries the ensign of victory, Mr. John Surmon and Choja Surhud, English factors, have represented to those who stand at the foot of the high throne, that customs are remitted on English goods all over the empire, except at the port of Surat; and that at the said port, from the time of Shah Jehan, two per cent. was fixed for the customs; from the time of Aurungzebe, three and a half per cent. was appointed; and in other places none molested them on this account; and in the time of Bahador Shah, two and a half per cent. only was fixed, and is in force until now; but, by reason of this oppression of the Muttaseddees, the English withdrew their factory three years ago; and in the Soubahs of Behar and Orissa this nation pays no customs; and in the port of Hoogly, in the Soubah of Bengal, they give yearly three thousand rupees as *Peshkush*, in lieu of customs. They hope that a yearly *peshkush* may be fixed at the port of Surat

\* The line of descent in the reigning family passed to females, to the exclusion of males.



in lieu of customs, as at other ports, and they agree to a yearly peshkush of ten thousand rupees.

"This order, which subjects the world to obey it, and which ought to be followed, is issued, in order that, as they agree to pay ten thousand rupees as peshkush at the port of Surat, you should take it annually, and on no account molest them further; and whatever goods or effects their factors may bring or carry away by land or water, to or from the ports of the Soubahs, and other ports, you are to look upon the customs thereof as free; let them buy and sell at their pleasure, and if any of their effects are stolen in any place, use your utmost endeavours to recover them, giving the robbers up to punishment and the goods to their owners; and wherever they settle a factory, and buy and sell goods, assist them on all just occasions, and if their accounts show that they have a claim upon any merchant, give the English their just due, and let no person injure their factors. They have likewise petitioned that the Dewans in the Soubahs may have on demand the original Sunnud, or a copy with the Nazim's or Dewan's seal affixed. It would be difficult to produce an original in every place, and they hope that a copy under the Crory's seal will be credited; and if they do not demand the original Sunnud, they will not be molested on account of a copy with the Nazim's or Dewan's seal; and in the island of Bombay, belonging to the English, where Portuguese coins are now current, the fortunate coins may be struck according to the custom of Chinapatam; and any of the company's servants who may be in debt and run away, must be sent to the chief of the factory; and the company's servants must not be molested on account of the Foujaric and Abwab Munhai, by which they are vexed and discouraged. This strict and high order is issued:—that a copy under the Crory's seal be credited; and that fortunate coins struck in the island of Bombay, according to the custom of the empire, be current; and if any of the company's servants run away in debt let him be taken and delivered to the chief of the factory; and let them not be molested on account of the Abwab Munhai. They have likewise represented that the company have factories in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and that they are willing to settle in other places. They hope that wherever they settle a factory, forty beegahs of land may be graciously bestowed upon them by the king; and that when their ships are driven ashore by storms and wrecked, the governors of the ports oppressively seize their goods, and, in some places, demand a fourth part. The royal

order is issued, that they act according to the customs of the factories in other Soubahs; and as this nation has factories in the king's ports, and dealings at court, and have obtained a miraculous firman, exempting them from customs, take care equitably of the goods of their ships which may be wrecked or lost in their voyages, and in all matters act conformably to this great order, and do not make an annual demand for a new grant. In this be particular.—Written on the 4th of Safir, in the 5th year of this successful reign." \*

Notwithstanding the exceeding perspicuity of this firman, only a few years were permitted to elapse when the native authorities and merchants at Surat conspired to extort money from the English. The first attempt of this sort was very characteristic of a Mohammedan government. The English were informed that their factory and the ground annexed to it, by firman, was given to a great saint who took a fancy to it, and from whom the emperor could withhold nothing. It was at the same time intimated that a present to the governor might be instrumental in preventing the transfer, as he would use his influence with the aforesaid saint not to be persistent in his desires to possess the property of the English. The latter submitted to this exaction, based upon so flimsy a pretence, but intimated that if their factory were taken from them, they would leave Surat, and if driven to do so, they would blockade the port and ruin its trade.

Soon after another occasion arose which gave an opportunity for extorting money from the English. A strange ship, which was generally supposed to be Danish, cruised in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, capturing Mogul shipping. When tidings of these piracies arrived at Surat, there was a terrible outcry amongst the native population. The English factory was attacked by the populace, and the lives of its inmates endangered. The English were told that they must make good whatever the merchants of Surat lost by pira-

\* The following explanation of the terms used in this firman may be desirable for persons unacquainted with Indian terms. *Aumils* are collectors of revenue, or superintendents of districts. *Jagheerdars*, holders of assignments of land. *Foujdar*, a police magistrate at Surat; his duties were confined to the suburbs and places in the vicinity. *Crory* or *Karoory*, an officer who makes himself responsible for the rents of a district. *Rhadar*, a collector of duties payable on the roads. *Goujirban*, a collector of duties at ferries and passes. *Zemindar*, a landowner, who paid a yearly sum to the king. *Muttasaddie*, an accountant for the Soubah. *Peshkush*, a present or tribute. *Dewan*, the receiver general of a province. *Nazim*, the first officer of the province. *Abwab Munhai*, a tax on forbidden things, such as spirituous liquors, courtesans, &c. *Soubah*, a province. *Sunnud*, a patent or charter.



cies, and no remonstrances on their part, upon the unreasonableness of making them responsible for the acts of robbers, either of their own or any other nation, had the slightest effect upon the governor, who placed guards upon the factory, virtually making prisoners of its inmates. The company's broker was assaulted in open durbar, and finally incarcerated. Upon this, the English chief laid in stores of provision and ammunition, as far as clandestine means allowed him, and prepared for the defence of the factory. When this was accomplished, he ordered the English ships lying off to lay an embargo upon all Mohammedan vessels. The governor was compelled, in order to put an end to such an inconvenience, to open negotiations, and promised that no molestation of the English or their property should be again permitted, the president, on his part, promising to make compensation if it were proved that a piracy was committed by an English ship in the company's service. Thus the only argument of any validity in the esteem of the natives—force, soon brought matters to their ordinary course. These events were followed by sanguinary feuds and foul conspiracies among the natives themselves, in which the English had no part, but which more or less affected their interests. Gradually, however, they became more influential, and governors found it to be their interest and duty to afford them opportunities of peaceful and equitable trade.\*

At Cambay, where the English had a small factory, their history was a counterpart of that of their countrymen at Surat. The English continued to outwit the extortioners, and retain the factory, and carry on some commerce, although the country around was often laid waste, and the town repeatedly fired by contending freebooters. Every rajah was a robber, and the people did not like them the less on that account.

The following passage from "A Chapter on the History of Bombay," in the *Bombay Quarterly* of January, 1856, must read very strangely to those who laud "the great Mohammedan democracy:"—"The followers of Hameed Khan next appear on the horizon, levying thirty-five thousand rupees on the town, and demanding a thousand from the residency. 'The first time they went back with a put-off,' writes Mr. Innes, 'the next with a flat denial, and I have not heard from them since, further than that the governor and the Geenim fellow here have advised them to desist, the latter adding that the English even would not pay them. They are but two hundred men, and I am under no manner of apprehension of danger.' The governor then

locked, and affixed seals to, the English broker's warehouses. This measure Mr. Innes 'judged to be bully;' so counteracted it by menaces and two cases of drams, which were more effectual than money in subduing the rapacity of these licentious Mussulmans. The seals were removed, and the eccentric resident a month later replies to the congratulations of his superiors with this counter-hint:—"I shall have regard to your hint of the governor being dry; though I have quenched his thirst at my own charge too often for my pocket." Terrible days were those for merchants and helpless ryots. Pelajee, Kantajee, Hameed Khan, governors from Delhi, and certain Cooly chiefs,—all squeezed them in turn, until the cultivators refused to till the ground, and the country was threatened with famine. After Hameed Khan's followers had gone away almost empty, a new deputy-governor was appointed, on condition that he should send to Ahmedabad ninety thousand rupees, to be extorted from the inhabitants. No sooner did the unhappy merchants and shopkeepers hear of his approach than they hid themselves, or made their escape to the neighbouring villages. For six days not a man was to be seen in the streets of Cambay, although his excellency threatened that unless the people made their appearance he would deliver the city to indiscriminate pillage."\*

Early in the eighteenth century, and some considerable time before the company's agents were sent thither, independent Englishmen went to Scinde, and introduced a coasting trade between Saribundur, on the Indus, and the western parts of what is now called the Bombay presidency. Among the interlopers who adventured upon this traffic was Alexander Hamilton, author of *The New Account of the East Indies*. He found the coasts and inland roads swarming with robbers, Beloochees, and Mackrans, who, the *Bombay Quarterly* suggests, were the fisher caste. Captain Hamilton having in his voyages encountered and conquered various pirates, obtained a reputation along the coast which kept many in awe of his sword who were very desirous to plunder his property. On one occasion he sold goods to certain merchants in the interior of Scinde, who dared not convey their purchases in consequence of the predatory hordes who beset the way. Hamilton, in order to secure the payment, undertook to escort the goods to their destination. He joined a Kaffela of fifteen hundred beasts of burden, the same number of men and women, and a guard of two hundred horsemen. His own party consisted of thir-

\* *Surat Diary*, July, 1724, Feb. 4, 1725.

\* Letters from Daniel Innes, in the *Surat Diary*, 1720 to 1725.



teen sailors. The strange cavalcade had not proceeded far when troops of robber horse presented themselves in large numbers, brandishing spears and swords. Hamilton placed the baggage animals in a line as a barricade, with the cowardly native horsemen on the flanks; he armed his sailors with fuses, and appointed them to eligible positions for an effective defence. The robbers sent forward one of their number, who demanded unconditional surrender; menacing promiscuous slaughter, in case of refusal. One of the sailors shot the miscreant through the head. Possibly the robbers considered that some mistake had been committed, for a second was sent on a like mission, who met with the same fate as his predecessor. A third coming to reconnoitre the cause of these misfortunes, fell dead from another shot the moment he came within range. The enemy became panic-struck, and the escort of the merchants taking advantage of their disorder, charged them with effect, slaying some, and dispersing the whole. Hamilton, according to his own account, was regarded as a hero of surpassing prowess, alike qualified to humble robbers by land or sea.

Towards the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century the East India Company established its agents in Scinde, and carried on with difficulty a desultory trade in that region.

It is impossible to peruse the proceedings of the British during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, especially by the aid of documents only recently brought to light, without coming to the conclusion expressed by an American divine, not generally favourable to the English nor to the character they displayed in the acquisition and development of their Indian empire:—"In considering the course of policy pursued by the English, which has resulted in their acquiring in India one of the largest empires ever known, there appears much less to censure in the Directors and controlling power of the East India Company in England than in their agents in India. Increase of territory has not generally been the desire of the proprietors or directors of the company, and in accordance with this view have been the general spirit, and often the positive character, of their instructions to their agents in India."\*

## CHAPTER LXIII.

### THE BRITISH IN WESTERN INDIA DURING THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

NOTWITHSTANDING the scantiness of English records, at all events of published records and accessible manuscripts, the history of the English in Western India during the second quarter of the eighteenth century affords interesting incidents, and such as illustrate the progress of British power. It has been as truly as eloquently written by a reviewer in the *Bombay Quarterly*:—"A mercantile company transformed into one of the great powers of the earth, and driven by the force of circumstances to the conquest of an empire, is, like other effects which we do not trace to their causes, regarded as a phenomenon. This is merely because historians have been able to collect only a few facts relative to its earliest days, and those facts separated by frequent and large lacunæ. But an object of the present narrative is to show that the growth of English dominion, although fostered by a superhuman arm, was regulated by fixed and natural laws,—even by laws similar to those which regulate the development of the human

mind. The East India Company was trained and gradually brought to maturity by a process parallel to that through which a little inmate of the nursery may have passed when first starting on the race for fame. The possessor of a wooden sword, a penny trumpet, and a diminutive drum, glows already with military ardour as a gay regiment passes by him, and the spark is fanned into a flame by hard knocks at school, struggles in manly games, and perhaps town and gown rows at the university, until he submits to the preliminaries of drill, enters on real campaign, and in due time appears as a distinguished officer. So with respect to the East India Company, if its servants had been allowed to live peaceably in its nursery of Surat, without provocatives being offered to their military propensities, there would have been no more

\* *India, Ancient and Modern, Geographical, Historical, Political, Social, and Religious; with a Particular Account of the State and Progress of Christianity.* By David O. Allen, D.D., Missionary of the American Board for twenty-five years in India.

\* July, 1856.



probability of their becoming a political power than there is at present of any steam navigation or railway company becoming one; and at the breaking up of the Mogul empire they might have been found, like ancient Britons when the Roman legions were withdrawn, incapable of defending themselves against distant rovers or predatory neighbours. But they were very soon taught the necessity of self-dependence,—of looking to none but themselves for an assertion of their rights. The clamours of a ferocious mob endeavouring to beat down their factory gates first induced them to keep a small establishment of peons as a domestic police; the oppressions which they endured under native governments then convinced them that a fortified factory and an insular stronghold were required; next, because their trade would otherwise have been at the mercy of pirates, they built, equipped, and armed a fleet of grabs and gallivats; lastly, their very existence depended, not only on their maintenance of standing armies, but on their ability to cripple the strength of adversaries by invasions of their territories. We do not, indeed, assert that they have in every single instance been thus involuntarily led to aggression, or deny that they have more than once wilfully disturbed the comity of nations; but we maintain that they never contemplated the seizure of a province, much less of the Indian continent, until compelled by the force of circumstances; and that the Anglo-Indian is the only empire in the world which has not owed its origin to a lust of conquest. And it is highly instructive to observe that the events of the company's history form a regular chain, which was none of their forging. In welding the links together they were unconscious agents of Him who, holding nations in his balance, puts down one that He may set up another."

At the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century matters in Western India had advanced to this condition, or a state of things approximating to it—that either the English must retire from India, allowing hordes of savage pirates, robbers, and Mah-rattas to drive them out, in spite of firmans and treaties with the Moguls, or the sword of England must defend the commerce of England in India, and the lives and property of Englishmen on its shores.

In the last chapter reference to the daring and deeds of Angria has been frequently made. In the period now about to be treated, that able pirate became more conspicuous still as a creator of English history, for he did more than any other Indian chief to draw out the valour of the English, and to cause

them to nurse their military talents and resources.

In 1728 he made an offer of pacific settlement, but, in a few months afterwards, he captured the company's galley, *King William*, and made its master, Captain McNeal, a prisoner. This officer he held for years in bondage, and only gave him liberty on the payment of a large ransom. On the 12th of January, 1730, the English made a treaty with the Bhonislays of Sawunt Wave, for the purpose of holding Angria in check; but it did not answer their expectations. The death of Kanhojee Angria occurred the same year.\* He left two sons, between whom his government was divided. Their names, which occur frequently in connection with this period of the story of the English in India, were Sukagee and Sumbhagee. The former obtained Colaba; the coast southward was assigned to the other, who was the younger brother. Both these chiefs imitated their father in his rapacity and daring, and, except when they quarrelled with one another (like the members of all Indian families), they were equally the enemies of the English. The elder, however, had not long an opportunity of proving his propensities, for he died in 1733, while proposing peace to the British, and his envoys were actually before the president at Bombay. Sumbhagee prepared to possess himself of his brother's inheritance by legitimate claim, but a natural brother, who partook of much of the spirit of their father Kanhojee, attacked Colaba, and took it by escalade in a most intrepid manner. He was prompted to this act, and assisted in its performance, by the Portuguese, who were always meddling and intriguing, and always, in the long run, to their own destruction. All efforts to displace this chivalrous man were in vain. His power increased, he formed alliances, and extended his enterprise, and attempted the fort of Ageen, under the protection of the guns of which reposed the fleet of the Siddee of Jingeera. The rapid strides of his ambition and power alarmed the Bombay government, and Captain McNeal, then at liberty, was ordered to assist with a squadron the fleet of the Siddee. The squadron was not promptly dispatched, as its commanders lacked enterprise, for a considerable time elapsed before the ships left Bombay. It would have been better had they not left at all, for the orders received at Bombay were so unmilitary as to make the expedition simply ridiculous. Some muskets and powder were presented to the endangered ally, and the squadron left him to his fate, which was speedily sealed by the success of the enemy.

\* Consultation Book of the Bombay Government.



Emboldened by success, and learning to despise the English, from their previous timid and time-serving policy, this scion of the house of Angria advanced his pretensions and his forces in the more immediate neighbourhood of the English. On the river Pen, which flows into the harbour of Bombay, stood a town called Rewanee: this the modern Angria seized, and thus commanded the communications between the Island of Bombay and the continent.

At this time, Bajee Rao, whose name is so illustrious in Mahratta history,\* was in the zenith of his influence, and he had the discrimination to see that the resources, position, and character of the English ensured their ultimate superiority to all surrounding powers. He flattered them, and, in the name of the Rajah of Sattara, opened negotiations with them, and, in very humble terms, requested that they would not permit their fleet to interfere with his naval enterprises. Unfortunately, the Peishwa was in alliance with Angria, and they therefore would not offer those tokens of good-will which they desired.

The English meditated new hostile projects against their unrelenting foe, and, in order to accomplish their purposes, formed alliances with the Siddees. The *Bombay Quarterly* describes this condition of affairs as follows:—"Messrs. Lowther and Dickenson had arranged with the several Siddees of Jingeera a treaty of alliance, afterwards ratified by their government, according to which both parties bound themselves to act in concert against Angria, and not to treat with him except by mutual consent. They agreed that all prizes taken at sea should be allotted to the English, and to the Siddee all conquests made on land, with the exceptions of Khanery, which, if taken, should be delivered with all its guns and stores to the English, and the fort and district of Colaba, which should be demolished. The contracting parties were to divide equally between themselves the revenues of Colaba, and the English to build a factory and fort at Mhopal in that district, situated between the rivers Pen and Nagotana." To this paragraph the following note is added:—"The above account of operations against Angria is imperfect, but as complete as could be compiled from the mutilated records of government for the months from June to December inclusive, and March, 1734. Grant Duff, who chiefly depended for his knowledge of the records upon extracts furnished him by Mr. Romer, the political agent at Surat, has not alluded to these events, which belong to Maratha history, and are only worthy of notice as exhibiting the

first attempts of the English at offensive warfare." It is passing strange that so high an authority should describe this as the initiation of offensive war! The career of Sir John Childs and the policy of Sir Joshua Childs were evidences, as well as the bitter misfortunes they produced, that this was not the first essay in offensive warfare in India on the part of the British, whatever might be the merits of the cause in either case. The English, about this time, succeeded in intercepting Angria's fleet by a squadron under the command of three captains, whose authority, as far as one can gather from the records of their proceedings, was equal. The enemy fled and escaped; the usual results of divided command, irresolution and ill-concerted action, ruined the undertaking.

The English found the Siddees of little use. The Mahratta spirit had stopped the career of these once renowned cruisers of the Indian seas: their day of glory, such as it was, became obscured; the Angrian star shone out cloudless. Family disputes broke out in the renowned and formidable house of the fierce Mahratta sea kings; a fraternal jealousy left scope for English diplomacy, for as the English became warriors in spite of themselves in India, so also did they become diplomatists. Captain Inchbird was deemed very efficient in that department, and was dispatched from Bombay for the express purpose of using his knowledge of native languages, usages, and dispositions to foment the dispute between the Angria brothers, so that they might not coalesce for the injury of English interests.

Naval operations were undertaken which were committed to Commodore Bagwell. After long watching for the enemy, he at last, on the 22nd December, 1738, desiered nine grabs and thirteen gallivats issuing from the fortified port of Gheria. He bore down upon them, although their force was vastly superior to his. They fled, and sought shelter in the river of Rajapore. As usual they were successful in flight, and although they suffered from the commodore's broadsides, they knew how to elude him. In spite of his vigilance, while he pursued this flotilla, other armed ships of the enemy captured English merchantmen. The English commanders seemed generally to possess more courage than capacity, more enterprise than intelligence. The conduct of the men, both military and naval, was perfect, daring to the uttermost, enduring, loyal, and obedient, worthy of being led by better men than their country generally assigned to the task.

The resources of the pirates were constantly recruited by the captures they made:

\* Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*.



all sorts of military stores were obtained by plunder from English ships.

Soon after the cowardly flight of Angria's fleet from Commodore Bagwell's little squadron, four large East Indiamen were attacked by a powerful piratical flotilla belonging to the same chief. A single ship of the commercial squadron beat them off and punished them severely. The English in their sea encounters with the pirates were deficient in smartness, promptitude, and vigilance, but their courage, gunnery, and physical strength were dreaded by their foes; their capacity to tack and work large ships in action also inspired a salutary fear in their foes.

The *other* Angria, called Menagee, was a false friend and a weak foe. His perfidious insolence, cowardice, meanness, violence, and sometimes daring enterprise, were the subjects of perpetual complaint at Bombay. The grand diplomatist of the government and council, Captain Inchbird, was at last obliged to change the use of the tongue and the pen for that of great guns and the sword; cruising about, he made prizes of Menagee's fishing-boats, grabs, and gallivats. Nevertheless, the latter seized the Island of Elephanta. When at last reduced to misfortune by his brother, he became the sycophant of the English, and humbled himself to beg their aid. They gave it, saved him from his enemies, and made him more an enemy than ever. There are men, says Charles Lever, who would betray you to the very men from whom you saved them. Such was Menagee Angria. It would strike a casual reader of the old documents which disclose the events of this period that the English meddled too much, entangled themselves too frequently with weak alliances, and believed the promises of princes too often, if not too implicitly; a close study of their peculiar dangers, treatment, temptations, and deficiencies, however, extenuate such errors in some cases, and in others justify the resort to means which, in ignorance of all the peculiarities of the situation, would now be pronounced culpable.

Soon after the beginning of the second quarter of the century, the Rajah of Sattara became a very conspicuous person, although the vizier was virtually the sovereign, and the rajah little better than the prisoner of his ostensible servant. The rajah was regarded as the Mahratta, *par excellence*, the Sevajee of the day. Before his encroachments the Portuguese were steadily receding; fort after fort fell, factory after factory was plundered, and but for the protection of the English in some instances, a few years would have sufficed for the hordes of the rajah to sweep the Portuguese from the seaboard of Western India.

The English believed that an alliance with the Portuguese against the encroachments of this powerful enemy was their true policy, but as was commonly the case, their practice was time-serving and timid; they consumed in debate the time required for action, and were too late in the aid they offered, or proffered an amount of assistance so obviously below what was necessary as to be equivalent to the refusal of help. Certainly, the Portuguese deserved nothing at their hands. The assistance rendered was, as might be expected, repaid with treachery. Morally, the Portuguese were no higher than the natives,—often lower. The impossibility of putting any faith in them much influenced the procedure of the East India Company's agents. When the English really did render efficient and successful assistance, no gratitude or goodwill was evoked. The British were the objects of a deep, deadly, religious animosity, which no services could appease. This was well understood on both sides, and the impressions mutually produced by even acts of kindness on the part of the more fortunate English did nothing to heal the feud.

The year 1739 was a memorable one for both nations, in consequence of the fall of Bassein. This city, the largest and richest oriental city ever built by the Portuguese, was besieged by the never-resting Mahrattas, whose determination to expel the Portuguese from India grew stronger as their efforts were crowned with success. The position of the city was one of considerable importance to the lords of Bombay; for, if a vigorous power like that of the Mahrattas held it, they would by that means endanger the commerce and liberty of those who occupied Bombay. This may be seen, and also a glance at its present condition obtained, from the following well-drawn sketch:—"Situated at the northern extremity of that narrow arm of the sea which clasps the islands of Salsette and Bombay, is the ruined city of Bassein. It is a monument of departed greatness, and a love of splendour, as distinct from the love of money, for which the English were so famed. Its fertile soil still rewards the fortunate cultivator; but its streets are scenes of utter desolation, its buildings roofless, its tombs of lordly bishops and governors mouldering as the bones they conceal, and twisted roots struggle successfully to displace the stones of its massive walls. There, where a fanatically religious, irrationally proud, and coarsely dissipated people kept high festivals, led gorgeous pageants, toyed in wanton amours, and drowned the intellect of their species in Goanese arrack, or the heady wines of Oporto,—there silence and ruin sat supreme,



until at last a speculator's drastic energies have introduced the creaking mill, and jarring voices of native labourers. For years the tenantless city was itself a monument of the Indo-Portuguese race, and a fertile theme for the meditations of romantic visitors. 'It reminds me,' wrote Bishop Heber, 'of some story of enchantment which I had read in my childhood, and I could almost have expected to see the shades of its original inhabitants flitting about among the jungle which now grows in melancholy luxuriance in the courts and areas of churches, convents, and houses.' At the period of which we write, Bassein stood uninjured by an enemy, unshorn of its grandeur, having been for two centuries in undisturbed possession of the Portuguese, whose historian declares that it was the largest city which his countrymen had built in India, and comprehended the greatest extent of territory. Seven churches of an almost uniform style had little to strike the observer, except their size and rather elegant façades; but surrounded, as they still are, by the ruins of tenements belonging to monastic orders, they testify that the Portuguese had a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge. The city was protected by a strong wall and ramparts, flanked with bastions, and so fearful were the inhabitants of a surprise, that for long no Mahratta had been permitted to pass a night within the gates.\*

The Mahrattas laid siege to the place, which they conducted with bravery, skill, and persistence never before equalled by them. The Portuguese resisted with a bravery rarely equalled by any people. It seemed as if, in the hour of their decline, they were once more to appear glorious, like the flame of a decaying lamp, bursting brilliantly upwards before it totally expires. The city at last surrendered, when defence was no longer possible even by the wisest, strongest, and bravest, 800 officers and soldiers, as well as many inhabitants, having perished, the enemy having lost 5000 men, or, as the English at Bombay believed, 20,000. The besieged, during their arduous struggle, implored the assistance of the English, both as to skill and money. The advice tendered was impracticable; some money was lent on the security of six brass guns taken down from the defences. The acceptance of security by the English has been much censured; but when a former governor lent money for the defence of an ally, the company compelled him to refund it from his own purse, alleging that he did not hold money for political speculations, but for commercial purposes and the defence of Bombay, and he had no right to lend the

company's money without its order, however he might please to act with his own. The acceptance of the guns as security, which ought to have been used for the defence, has been also charged against the English as an act of selfishness; but the guns had been previously removed from the defences, on the strange ground that the king would value them too highly for the governor to risk their injury, and for the additional strange reason that the hands and hearts of Portuguese were better defences than mere matter! The English, therefore, asked only for the security of guns which were not used, and were not intended to be employed against the enemy. Besides, at the very time the Portuguese were crying out for money to the English, without offering any adequate security, the Jesuit establishments of the city were rich, and refused to part with their plate and treasures. Some assistance was obtained from them, after the English declared their want of authority to lend the company's money; but even then it was bestowed with reluctance. Most of the troubles to which the Portuguese were exposed were either occasioned or aggravated by that ecclesiastical party: so infatuated were they, that when, a short time before the siege of Bassein, the Mahrattas were investing Tanna, and it became necessary, on the advice of the English engineers sent to assist, to break down all buildings which might impede the fire of the besieged, or offer cover to the foe, the members of the Jesuit order resisted, and successfully resisted, all attempts to comprise their property in the necessary demolitions, until the English, with a high hand, compelled the measure to be carried out. When Bassein fell, the English, acting within what they supposed to be the limits of their authority, sent a strong naval escort, and brought off the whole garrison and all the Portuguese civilians of the place, to the number of nearly 1000, who were fed in Bombay at the public expense. The guests behaved as badly as the hosts behaved generously. The Jesuits had undertaken to lend a certain sum for the payment of the troops, in order to enable the latter to purchase food and other requisites for prolonging the defence. Their reverences now refused to fulfil their promise, while the Portuguese soldiers were mutinous against their officers, and filled Bombay with tumult. Both parties agreed to use the English as referees. The governor and council decided against the Jesuits; but the fathers were not so willing to yield to a decision against themselves as to make a reference. It was necessary for the English to give hints that force must be employed to induce the Jesuits to fulfil their pledges and

\* "Bassein, as it is and was:" *Bombay Quarterly*.



abide by the reference. The troubles of the English from their guests did not end there; broils and bloodshed constantly occurred among the Portuguese soldiers, who also wounded and robbed the inhabitants of Bombay, and it had become a serious consideration whether the council must not send this vile military rabble away, when the time arrived with the opportunity for their own withdrawal. They then refused to embark unless fresh arrears were paid to them; the English advanced the money to the Portuguese governor, a brave and magnanimous man.

The English were beset with importunities to assist other beleaguered Indo-Portuguese cities,—to lend money, without security, for their defence, while the Jesuit fathers were in possession of treasures which could only be wrung from them by force, in the service of a country which had loaded them with honours and riches, and was so devoted to them. They acted as men who owed no allegiance to the Portuguese crown, but whose service was due to a distinct power for whom their resources must be reserved, from whatever country derived. The remnant of the Portuguese were withdrawn from Bombay, by arrangements made by their own viceroy at Goa; but so absurdly defective were their plans that the drooping soldiers and civilians had to march a long way overland to Goa, and fight their way, leaving a third of their number slain or in the hands of the Mahrattas. The gallant governor of Bassein was made an exile and a beggar by his ungrateful country.

The English became now the protectors of their old enemies, and with much discomfort to themselves. They counselled the surrender to the Mahrattas of certain small forts which could not be defended, under a treaty securing peace to their other possessions. Had this not been done, either the Mahrattas or Angria would have taken them. It was with great difficulty, through the redoubtable diplomatist, Captain Inchbird, that the English persuaded the Mahrattas to act towards the Portuguese with any forbearance. When the arrangement was effected, the Jesuits refused to allow any portion of their property to come within the stipulated surrender, and preached so seditiously to the ignorant people, that an insurrection was raised. Fear of the Mahrattas on the one hand, and the necessity of leaning upon the English, at last prevailed with the people, and the reverend fathers, after many protests and denunciations against Mahrattas, English, and Portuguese politicians, were obliged to give way. The English, whose pity was strongly moved by the sufferings of the Portuguese people, were made indignant and angry by the selfish, bigoted, unpatriotic,

and mad proceedings of the Jesuit fathers: they acted as if their minds, absorbed in one class of ideas, were unable to comprehend any other, however obviously justice, or the exigencies of circumstances, might demand calmness and good sense.

In this year of disaster to the Portuguese, the English sent a complimentary letter to the supposed head of all the Mahratta tribes, the Rajah of Sattara, by Captain Gordon; and another letter to the Peishwa, by the ubiquitous Captain Inchbird. These letters were full of compliments, while the private instructions of the envoys were full of intrigue and treachery. This the English justified by the fact that they had to deal with persons without honour or forbearance—that it was necessary, if possible, to fathom all their schemes, safety depending upon the result, and that such salutary and essential objects only could be obtained by playing a superior part to their adversaries in the game of finesse. It is scarcely necessary to add that a direct and manly part would have answered better all purposes that ought to have been entertained at all.

Captain Gordon proceeded to Sattara, and delivered his credentials to the rajah. The captain was charmed with the magnificent scenery of the Deccan, which was not known at Bombay, and which in the appropriate place has been described in this work. Gordon's object was penetrated by a son of Bajee Rao; but nevertheless, it was impossible for the young man to make so sure of the conclusion to which he had come as would enable him to act in any way against the company's representative. On his return, Captain Gordon had an interview with the Peishwa himself at Poonah, which city was then enriched by the plunder of Southern, Central, and Western India, and by the commerce which was created by the residence of the English at Bombay. Gordon fancied that the Peishwa against whom he was intriguing was not unfriendly to the English, and that within the whole region which was traversed by the envoy the English were popular. This arose from an impression that, as compared with the Portuguese, they were a people of religious toleration; as compared with the Dutch, they were conciliatory and polite to native powers; their demand for the products of the looms of Poonah made them very popular with the weaving population of the city and populous country around; and their possessions in India were of a character to command respect from those who held power and success in reverence. At Surat, Bombay, Tellicherry, Madras, and on the Hoogly the English were strong. At Surat they had no territory



except the little ground connected with the factory, but most of the merchants were their debtors. They did not, like the French, settle there, and stay long enough to incur large debts, and then flee to other places, in order to make them the scene of similar dishonesty. Bajee Rao, whose word was law from the foot of the Rajah of Sattara's throne to the remotest bounds of Mahratta incursions, respected the English for the firm way in which they had kept their footing, and their probity in payment. The rajah thought the English a good sort of people; Bajee Rao, who really possessed the power of the rajah, thought them useful; the citizens of the great city of Poonah almost deemed them necessary. Each of these tribunals pronounced a favourable verdict, and speculated after its own way as to the future. The people of Poonah wished for larger orders for their beautiful fabrics, and looked to the English to obtain them. Bajee Rao considered them as "the balance of power," and the most reliable commercial people who traded with the peninsula, and a nation not to be intimidated, nor lightly to be provoked in war; the poor rajah considered them clever and rich, and begged them to send him presents of "pigeons and turkeys, and European fowls and birds." It does not appear that Captain Gordon effected any object contemplated by his mission, but he made some blunders in the attempt to conceal his object, brought back a great deal of useful information, political and commercial, preserved accurate and written detail of what he saw and heard, and was probably the most economical envoy ever sent out by the East India Company from any of its presidential capitals.

Captain Inchbird's mission was to the Mahratta at Bassein. He was met by the general there, who, however, demanded as a preliminary the payment of a certain sum. It does not appear plain whether this demand was for tribute or a simple piece of extortion; the captain however refused, and neither blandishments nor menaces could induce him to give any money. He boldly replied that his country submitted to no impositions, which, however, was a barefaced untruth, as the policy of the company always was to buy off, by money payments, the enemies by whom they were surrounded, so long as doing so could be made to comport with profitable trade. Inchbird discovered that the Mahratta chiefs were all well acquainted, quite as well as he was, with the objects for which Captain Gordon had been sent to Sattara. It was obvious from this circumstance that the company's officers were in some cases unfaithful, or that the president and council of

Bombay were surrounded by spies and traitors in the persons of their confidential native employés. Inchbird was a man well fitted for his office; he extricated himself from the difficulties and dangers with which the penetration of the Mahrattas of the double game his employers were playing had thus unexpectedly beset him. He even succeeded in blinding his astute interrogators, and persuading them that their interests lay in alliance with the English, or at all events in a material obligation of peaceful and commercial intercourse. His mission terminated much to his own credit by arranging the terms of a treaty, dated the 12th of July, 1739, which was ratified at Bombay. According to this, the Peishwa conceded to the English free trade in his dominions. The contracting parties mutually engaged that debtors endeavouring to evade their responsibilities should be either delivered up, or compelled to pay all that was due; that runaway slaves should be seized and restored to their masters; that if the vessels of one power should be driven by stress of weather into the ports of the other, assistance should be rendered them; and that such vessels as were wrecked on the coast should be sold, one-half the proceeds of sale being paid to the owner, the other half to the government on whose coast the wreck might be thrown.\*

Soon after these transactions, Bombay was filled with consternation by "wars and rumours of wars," in which these terrible Mahrattas had the chief part. Preparations were making for enterprises which were variously interpreted, but the terrified inhabitants of Bombay believed that for an invasion of their island, the gathering together of arms and men, and ships, on various points, was intended. Spies or merchants made known that Poonah was a focus of military preparation; and cannon foundries were at work on a large scale, producing guns and mortars of larger calibre and better manufacture than had been known among the native powers of India. Many of the people of Bombay buried their valuables or fled. The president was afraid to send away the ships of war as convoys with the merchantmen, lest the Mahrattas from Salsette or Bassein should make a descent. Such ships as went without convoys were captured by some one of the half-dozen of distinct piratical powers which made these seas a terror to the unprotected merchant. When the convoys were sent, indications of a sudden attack appeared, which increased until the return of the naval squadron afforded protection; the

\* "The First Wars and Treaties of the Western Presidency:" *Bombay Quarterly Review*.



people of Bombay all the while living in the utmost consternation. Matters assumed a condition of alarm and uncertainty as bad as had ever been experienced since the English came into possession of it.

On the 9th of November, 1739, while Bombay was thus overcast with gloom, a storm burst over the coasts of South Western India, such as had not been known to living men. Three of the company's largest and best armed ships, commanded by three of their ablest and bravest officers, foundered, and all on board perished. When the terrible tidings reached the agitated community of Bombay, fear struck every soul, and the belief universally prevailed that the days of prosperity in Bombay were numbered. The place was at the mercy of strong and powerful enemies.

Their fear was followed by what appeared to be a foretaste of their fate. Sumbhagee Angria, their old and malignant enemy, sallied forth, swept the harbour of Bombay of the fishing-boats then upon its waters, and made captives eighty-four men of their crews.

In this state of suspense, the factors, garrison, and community of Bombay must be left for a while, until some notice is taken of other portions of Western India, where British interests sustained the pressure of the times, and where the condition of affairs exercised some influence upon the fortunes of Bombay. As in a chain the weakness of some links changes the power of the whole concatenation, however strong the other links with which the weaker are connected, so it was with the chain of forts and stations where the English now transacted their business. These forts and stations were as grappling irons, which were fixed to the great prize which the English adventurers were to board and capture and keep for ever. However unconscious the English were of their actual relation to the country, as it regarded the political action of their power upon it, and the working of those natural laws in the moral government of God, by which nations affect nations in the various contiguities into which they are brought, it is not now difficult to see how these laws were at work, and how consistent, consecutive, and ramified the influences which were gradually consolidating English power. The very seas and storms which tossed the bark of English fortunes, bore it in safety over the shoals which lay in its course, and against which, in calmer seas, it might probably have been made a wreck.

Tellicherry was a very important station commercially and politically. After Bombay, it was the most important position, in every

respect, which the English occupied in Western India during the first half of the eighteenth century. It was so much thought of by the directory at home, that a chaplain was assigned to it, a privilege accorded only to Bombay and Tellicherry. When they received him, which was about this time, they did not know what to do with him. How to value his sacred ministration was not their first care, but what place they should assign to him in society! This was a question too puzzling for the intellect of the East India Company's servants at Tellicherry in those days, and they referred the doubtful investigation to the pellucid minds of their superiors—the president and council of Bombay. The latter were amazed and angry that such a question should be sent in the midst of “struggles for life,” whilst the Mahratta was knocking with his spear butt at every one's door. They perceived at once that the chaplain should take his place *after the factors*! Such was the esteem in which English commercial men in the service of the East India Company in the early part of the eighteenth century held professional men, and especially the members of the most sacred and learned of all professions. The English in India were not disposed in those days to worship their priests, and seemed more willing to do without them than the factors of one hundred years before.

With or without a chaplain—and whether or not the possessor of that office was treated as a scholar and a gentleman ought to have been, which seldom was the case in the company's factories in those days—Tellicherry grew rapidly in power and in relative importance. In relation to other English possessions it was of some note. The factory of Onore was subordinate to it. This lesser settlement was celebrated for the pepper which grew on the lowlands, and for the sandal wood which was native to the rocky heights in the neighbourhood. Onore itself acquired some considerable celebrity in the annals of after wars. Bajee Rao and his Mahrattas had plundered the country around, levying tribute upon the Carnatic far and wide, so that the inhabitants of Bednure and Balgee left their fields uncultivated, and caused the functions of the English factors at Onore for a time to be suspended. This occurred in 1727, but how long this state of alarm lasted it is difficult to conjecture. Up to the year 1740, the fear of Mahratta freebooters depressed cultivation, and, consequently, trade in this district, more or less.

The general position and relation of Tellicherry to English interest may be seen by the following brief and accurate description



by the author of *The First Wars and Treaties of the Western Presidency*:—

“The town of Tellicherry was built on a rising ground near the sea, in a country consisting, like all Malabar, of low hills and narrow valleys, and was in the petty kingdom of Colastry, though closely bordering on that of Cotiote. Moderate land-winds, with cool and refreshing breezes from the sea, made the climate celebrated amongst Europeans for its salubrity, and they were in the habit of styling Tellicherry the Montpelier of India. To the west of the town, on a neighbouring hill two hundred and twenty feet in height, the English had a large, oblong, ill-constructed, and worse situated fort, containing a place of worship for themselves, and also for Roman Catholics, a handsome residence for the chief, warehouses, offices, barracks, and other public buildings. Opposite the fort, at the distance of a mile from the land, lay the shipping, where the water varied in depth from ten to twelve fathoms; and between the fort and shipping, on some rocks about four hundred yards from the shore, a small battery was annually raised for protection of the trade, and as regularly removed before the monsoons set in. Overlooking both town and fort was a tower called Cockan Candy, and a redoubt called Codoley, which could only have been rendered capable of defence against a regular army by a large outlay of money. Several other outworks also had been built on the land side: a mile and a half to the southward, and close to the sea, was the fort of Moylan, belonging to the English, and at one time or another they raised fortifications on the small island of Dhurmapatam, two miles and a half north-north-west of Tellicherry, between the territories of Colastry and Cotiote; on the Island of Madacara, about three quarters of a mile from the shore, stood another small fortress, so situated as to command the entrance to the river of Billiapatam, about twenty-one miles from Tellicherry. Dhurmapatam, of which they obtained possession in 1734, was extremely fertile, so that the lowlands yielded two crops of grain annually, and from such as were near the sea, salt was procured. The chief and factors at first attempted to cultivate the ground themselves, but unsuccessfully, and afterwards, by letting portions on lease to a Captain Johnson, who much improved it, and to some natives, they raised an annual revenue of 13,880 fanams, in addition to 6,598 fanams which Tellicherry and Moylan yielded. The cultivation of the coffee plant, which was early introduced from Mocha, soon became highly remunerative. Dhurmapatam would

have afforded a much better site for the company's factory than Tellicherry, as it was encompassed by three rivers, had a bold front towards the sea, a fine sandy road for ships, and was not commanded by any neighbouring hills. No fewer than five fortified works were built upon it, two of which protected the entrance of the river. Near it, and in the sea, was Grove Island, two hundred and fifty feet in length, on which also was a battery. We should observe, however, that the English were only now commencing to raise these fortifications, and that in enumerating them all, we have a little anticipated events; but even in 1730 the monthly expenses of the garrison required to defend them all, amounted to seven thousand rupees, and the company groaned under such a burden, which in those days appeared almost insupportable.”\*

In relation to the native powers, Tellicherry was securely placed. The surrounding chiefs were comparatively feeble and always at feud. Some were bribed, others made friends by complimentary letters and titles, &c. The factors at Tellicherry were adepts in the diplomacy requisite in dealing with small rajahs; in no other part of India had the company's servants an opportunity of becoming so expert. It was in relation to other European, or at all events to one European power, more particularly, that Tellicherry was at this juncture most important. The French were now firmly settled in India (as a future chapter will show), and their ambition was boundless. Before the first half of the eighteenth century had run its course, the idea of making the whole peninsula a French conquest inspired the French, and especially their chief, the great Labourdonnais.

At Surat the French were dishonest and insolent traders, and the patrons of Capuchin friars, whose chief work seemed to be the conversion of the English, among whom they made some converts, a matter likely enough, when the half Protestant character of the company's servants there is considered; their ignorance, indifference, and irreligion left them open to persuasive advocates of any plausible system, true or false. In 1722 the French were invited to settle in Malabar by the Boyanores chiefs, who, alarmed at the growing power of the English, were eager to find some strong European nation to place, as it were, between themselves and the dreaded encroachments. The French fixed upon Myhie, about three and a half miles from the English fort of Tellicherry. The position

\* *Bombay Quarterly*. Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*, and the Reports of the Tellicherry Factory supply the materials for this description.



chosen was superior to the English station both in a sanitary and military point of view; but a quarrel with the Boyanores deprived the Gauls of a station which would have seriously menaced the English settlements in that quarter. As early as 1725 the French disappeared from Myhie. In a chapter devoted to the progress of the French East India Company the reader had an opportunity of marking how, under the auspices of Richelieu, Colbert, Louis XIV., and other powerful persons, the French merchants had opportunity provided and means supplied to carry on schemes of enterprise in the East. Here it is only necessary to observe that while the French had been, for a considerable time, well established in their "Isle of France,"\* so they had acquired a powerful position at Pondicherry, which was the seat of a French governor. This city was strongly built, well fortified, and populous without being encumbered with masses of helpless natives. When Labourdonnais arrived, it possessed more than 70,000 souls. The natives of the surrounding districts often fled to it for safety from the marauding Mahrattas. In 1734, Dumas was governor, and began to raise money with the effigy of the king of France. He was also proclaimed a Nawab of the empire, and three large and fertile districts of territory were assigned to him. In 1741, Dupleix arrived and found it a flourishing place, which it might have continued, if not ruined by his ambition.

The English factors at Tellicherry had the honour, if such it may be regarded, of fighting the first field action, at all events with artillery, against the native Indian powers. This event came about as follows:—The French, after having been driven from Myhie by the Boyanores, fled to Calicut, but were reinforced, and recaptured their old settlement. From that time they became more firmly fixed as very near neighbours of the English, and proved to be very unneighbourly, as they constantly incited the petty chiefs against them, and against one another, when, by so doing, the peace of the English might be endangered. On several occasions native chiefs assembled ostensibly for hunting parties, and with the intention of trespassing upon the English territory, so as to lay foundation for a subsequent claim, on the principle that none hunt but on their own ground. This was a common prelude to some meditated land robbery in India, when one petty chief coveted the domains of another. The English, being apprised of this, occupied a neighbouring hill, upon which and in the vicinage of which the

trespass was expected to be made. At the time and in the manner the English had been led to believe, the great hunting party appeared, accompanied by a number of French military officers, evidently abetting the scheme and pointing out how it could most skilfully be accomplished. The English lay in ambush, and the moment the trespassers trod their ground, discharged their musketry upon them, bringing down many. The sham hunters being numerous and well armed, charged the hill; but the English, prepared against such an eventuality, had placed small cannon in position and swept off the intruders, who fled before this unexpected demonstration. The English, pursuing, skirmished in the plain, which was wooded, and kept up all day a dropping fire, in reply to that of their opponents, who were finally driven away. Next day, in greater numbers and better armed, believing that the English would suppose the danger over, the hunters returned; but the English had knowledge of their projects, and were prepared on all points to give them a warm reception. The second day was, in every respect, a repetition of the first, and the French and their native tools were much chagrined at the result. On a minor scale, these armed trespasses were practised for several years prior to 1730.

These occurrences prepared the native mind for intrigues and plunder, and led to alliances on the part of the French and English with neighbouring tribes; so that while the two great European nations were at peace with one another, they were indirectly at war in that part of Western India, through the media of the petty rajahs of the district. These ambushes and skirmishes may not be called field engagements, or dignified by the name of battles; but at length an opportunity arose for fighting a real battle against a native force.

In 1738-9 a war took place between the Malabarese and Canarese. The English took the part of the former, who, in a very cowardly manner, allowed their European ally to bear the brunt of the war. They acted as the Spaniards so frequently did in the wars waged under Moore, Wellington, Evans, and other generals on their behalf—kept at a distance until the fortune of battle was decided. The English, having inflicted defeats upon the Canarese, succeeded in intercepting their communications with their fortress of Modday. Rugonath, the Canarese general, made efforts to gain the fort, but the English dealt destruction to his forces. At last Captain Sterling, the English commander, permitted the unfortunate general and his beaten army to enter the place. The forbearance was not lost upon

\* Better known as the Mauritius, the name given to it by the Dutch after their Prince of Orange.



the Canarese chief, who sought the protection and friendship of the English. During these operations the Malabarese looked on from a distance, leaving the English to fight their battle.

Up to the close of the half century there were other skirmishes of a similar nature, in which the natives were equally deficient in courage, and the English in any permanent advantage. The assistance which every enemy of England in India—at all events every native enemy—derived from the French, enabled them to harass the factories and put the factors to expense; it also laid the foundation of those fierce wars with France in which that power was so seriously humbled and injured.

The condition of the East India Company's factories in Malabar at the close of the half century was, in almost every case, one of trouble and danger, mainly from the intrigues and warlike proceedings of the French, although Dutch, Portuguese, and natives also did their part in making the last decade of the half century one of struggle and conflict to the company. The Dutch and English were engaged during this period in angry discussions, especially at Surat and Ajengo. The Dutch, very learned and much given to argument, in the management of which they excelled, set up claims to exclusive trade in those places, on the ground of old treaties with native princes granting them a monopoly. The English factors were by no means so well educated or expert at their pens as the Dutch; they were prompt to answer in their own direct way, that they were there by treaty with the sovereigns of the country, and would stay there until driven away by the strong hand. Which hand was the stronger the Dutch at that advanced period were not disposed to try.

The conduct of the Portuguese was as foolish as faithless. While begging help from the English in one direction, they were in another insolent, overbearing, and aggressive. The French quarrelled with all, made enemies of all, but especially provoked and showed hostility to the English. The natives kept no faith, but robbed Europeans and also one another as occasion offered, and forced the English at last, as did also the French, to be combative. The following is a brief but accurate view of the general condition of Western India in relation to the English at this time:—"Before the British aspired to make conquests in Western India, the whole coast between the harbour of Bombay and Aguada, near Goa, was in possession of pirates. The Angrias of Colaba, the Siddees of Rajapore, the Angrias of Gheria, the Malwans and Sawunts, were the ruling families, and claimed the districts

on the sea board from north to south, according to the order in which their names are here mentioned. To the south of Goa were the British stations of Carwar, Honawur, and Tellicherry; also the following forts, some of which are still to be traced on the map, but the names of many appear to be lost. First came the forts of Cauligur and Seevashwur belonging to the Rajah of Soonda; then Peergur and Simpigur belonging to the Portuguese; two forts, the names of which were unknown, in the district of Ancola, belonging to the Rajah of Soonda; Condamum Berum, Mirjau-gur, Rajamungur, now called Rajamundroog, Cuntim, Chundauver, Honawur, Bockraw or Gursupa, Munky, Moodeshwur in the sea, Cundapoor, Bassanore, which included four forts, named respectively Ganjolly, Dungree, Cundapoor, and Cadnore, Barkoor, Cappy Carpary, Moolky, Malkem Patem in the sea, Mangalore, Coombla, Consaresat, Chundra-giri—all belonging to the Rajah of Bednore; Baikool, belonging to a Nair; Hosdroog, belonging to the Rajah of Bednore; two forts of Nelleasaroon taken by the French from the Rajah of Bednore; Mally, Mallaly, Ramdilly, and Huumuntgur, belonging to the French. The towns of Murjee and Bassanore, respectively to the north and south of Honawur, were, according to Forbes, supposed to be the Musiris and Barace of the ancients; but for this allocation there does not seem to have been sufficient reason. Near Mangalore was a celebrated temple of great antiquity called Kurkul, and a colossal image of the god Gomateshwur. A little way to the north of Tellicherry was Cananore, a sea-port, possessed by Ali Raja, petty ruler of the Maldives. Sailing from Tellicherry to Ajengo, the southernmost factory of the British, the voyager passed the French settlement of Myhie; then Sacrifice Rock, so called because an English crew had been massacred there by pirates at the commencement of the century; Calicut, the decayed sea-port of the Zamorin, where there was no longer a British factory, but only an agent; Brinjan, where was an English banksal or storehouse; Chetwa, a Dutch settlement; then Cranganore, the seat of a Portuguese archbishopric until it fell into the hands of the Dutch; the town of Cochin, with its extensive fortifications constructed by the Portuguese, but afterwards also captured by the Dutch; Porka and Calicoulan, Dutch factories for the purchase of pepper and cassia; and then Coulan, another town with numerous churches and strong fortifications taken by the Dutch from the Portuguese. Sailing three leagues further, he passed Eddava, once a Danish factory, but where only a Portuguese agent of the



British then resided, and after three more leagues he arrived at Ajengo.\*

"This account of the towns and forts on the coast, though not complete, is the best that can be drawn up with the aid of English records. It satisfies us that the inmates of the factories must have been dependent for their quiet and security not only on the dispositions of their native neighbours, but still more on the state of European politics. They were now so strong, that if they offended a native chief they suffered annoyance, not danger; but if Great Britain were involved in a war with France or Holland, an invasion from Myhie or Cochin might bring captivity, death, and ruin. In these factories, therefore, we find especial interest taken in the affairs of Europe, whilst the communications with the French and Dutch settlements are elaborate and important."†

At Tellicherry the alarm concerning a general war in Europe influenced the proceedings of the factors, both in the internal economy and external relations of the settlement. In the years 1740-1 this expectation was more general; and both the English and the French at Myhie were looking forth eagerly for orders to begin the war in India. England and France were at this time jealous, angry, and hostile; they were expending their resources on opposite sides of a struggle to which England had not yet committed herself as a principle. In 1744, however, the war broke forth, which, extending itself to India, produced such remarkable results. During the few years which intervened, the English and French in the neighbourhood of Tellicherry were close commercial competitors and rivals for native influence. It is here impossible to do more than refer to this as the key of many complications of the English with the natives; the detail must be reserved for chapters exclusively given to the conflicts of the English and French. The English had the best of the struggle which went on ere yet war was proclaimed; they were more successful in gaining influence over the natives—in securing the best of the pepper trade, and in creating annoyance to their adversaries: their action was more continuous, persevering, and steady, and their resolution more dogged and obstinate. The French were successful in gaining over one influential native, who was as dangerous to his friends as to his enemies; this was one Ali Raja, a rash, active, unprincipled Mohammedan zealot. He made various plundering expeditions to the

English island of Bhurmapatan, where he destroyed both property and life.

Frequently during the last decade of the first half of the eighteenth century the Mohammedans of Malabar were in a state of frenzied religious excitement. The Moplahs, a particular order of fanatics with whom the shedding of infidel blood was a profession, slaughtered many persons, the Portuguese priests whom they intensely hated suffering more particularly at their hands. These outrageous bigots conspired to murder all the European and Christian inhabitants of Malabar, but their plot was detected, and its authors punished or put to flight. The native chiefs professed to abhor these people and their acts, but were in reality delighted to hear of them, and extended protection to the assassins as widely as they dared. The French showed more dexterity in dealing with these persons than the English did; and, indeed, generally in suppressing native crime within their settlements, they were more skilful than their rivals; yet they maintained the forms of law, and dispensed substantial justice. However disposed at times the British and French were to mutual forbearance, the conduct of the native chiefs so complicated each as rendered it difficult to preserve a neutral attitude. If a native chief desired to prove his friendship for the French he attacked the English; or if, in alliance with the latter, he molested the French. The French seldom had a war with a native chief that the English were not obliged either to aid the latter, or to mediate, so as to preserve the company's treaties and obligations. Thus matters continued at Tellicherry until the breaking out of the great French war.

Ajengo, situated lower down the coast than Tellicherry, was an old settlement of the English, and one of the pleasantest in India. It was built on the banks of a small river which flowed rapidly between wooded banks, winding its bright way deviously, and forming picturesque islets, which were crowned with the luxuriant verdure of a land of perpetual summer. The pretty town was surrounded with gardens glowing in the bright attire of tropical floral beauty. The defences were four bastions commanding the approaches by land and sea, and mounted thirty-two eighteen pounder guns. The sea approach was further protected by a battery of twenty guns. The defences were in bad condition during the last ten years of the half century. There was but one gunner, and he was both blind and insubordinate. The French ships of war came very often to look at Ajengo, and the King of Travancore came too often to ascertain whether, as the ally of England, it was necessary for him to exterminate the ex-

\* *Diary of the Select Committee, Jan. 1788.* Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*, vol. i. chaps. i. xi. xii; vol. ii. chap. xvi.

† *The East India Company's Factories in Malabar*, by the Editor of the *Bombay Quarterly*.



pected invaders. This man was a terror to the Dutch, over whom he obtained several victories disastrous to their power in these parts. He had been the minister of the queen of Atringer, whose power all native princes respected; but he betrayed her, and usurped her authority. He became sovereign of a territory which ranged along one hundred and twenty miles of coast, southward from Cochin, but was of uncertain breadth; it, however, extended far into the interior, and comprised rich provinces. The annalist of the East India Company's factories in Malabar gives the following curious account of the opinions, practices, and policy of this fierce bandit:—"So great was the quantity of blood shed in his wars, that, when smitten with temporary remorse, he was induced by Brahmans to make an atonement,—such an one as could only have occurred to the wild imaginations of orientals excited by superstition and avarice. With two hundred and fifty-six pounds of the purest gold was formed the image of a cow, into which, on the twenty-first of March, 1751, his majesty entered, and there remained three days. At the expiration of that time he made his exit, purified from all the crimes of his past life, and regenerate. Congratulatory presents were sent him from the Dutch and English chiefs of Cochin and Ajengo, and the cow being cut into small portions was distributed amongst the interested inventors of this method for the remission of sins. From that time the ceremony, though rare as the hecatombs of the Greeks and horse-sacrifices of Northern India, became national, and some years afterwards, when Forbes was residing in Travancore, the reigning sovereign raised himself by it from a low to a high caste—an instance of exaltation unparalleled in modern times, but not without precedents in Hindoo antiquity." This prince was as brave as he was superstitious—as warlike as he was tyrannical. To the British he was for a long course of years, not only courteous, but kind, carrying on trade with them, and proving true to his agreements.

The English undoubtedly assisted this fierce king in his wars with the Dutch, although they were unwilling to acknowledge it when challenged by the Dutch agents to account for their conduct. The Hollanders, as much to test the professed neutrality of their British neighbours as for sake of any advantage to be derived, requested permission to march through the company's territory to attack his belligerent majesty of Travancore, but the request was refused, although arms and ammunition reached his sable majesty from the English arsenal. It was, at all events, in some measure from this cause that the Dutch, in 1740-2, suffered so much, and sustained such

mortifying reverses. From causes which the English did not profess to know, the soldiers, and even officers, of the Batavian army deserted to the English, who refused to surrender them. When the fort of Colesly was lost by the Dutch, after the King of Travancore had maintained a long siege against it, proof was afforded that to the deserters harboured by the English he owed his success. Still, when he offered to the English the exclusive trade of all the pepper and cloth produced in his dominions not required for its own consumption, if they would form an alliance offensive and defensive with him, they peremptorily refused. He found the French more accommodating. Notwithstanding this show of peace on the part of the British, the Dutch attributed their misfortunes to the factors of that nation, and threatened to drive the English out of the land: a more formidable power soon after essayed to do what the Dutch menaced, and was itself destroyed.

The King of Travancore, finding the French deceitful, and the English more bent on trade than war, refusing to be his ally for aggressive purposes, suddenly turned round and proposed an alliance with their enemies. The Dutch, who had strongly denounced the immorality of the English in cultivating the friendship of such a robber and assassin as the despot of Travancore, immediately accepted his alliance, and the proposal upon which it was based of driving all others out of India who disputed their combined supremacy. The king intended to use the Dutch for his own purposes, and then cast them away; they hoped to employ his resources for objects exclusively their own, and then turn upon him and subjugate him: the grand object of the alliance was, that each of the allies might find by it more facile means of robbing and destroying one another. Such was the political morality of India, native and European, at the close of the half century, the events of which are here related.

To the British in Ajengo, 1746 was a year of unusual peril. The topasses or native troops revolted, incited by a well-paid Mohammedan officer in their service. The mutiny was suppressed by means of sheer resolution on the part of the factors, and the ringleaders were punished. Thus early the English had warning of how little reliance was to be placed in native troops. In the field they had deserted on many occasions, in the garrison it was now found that they could be mutinous at a juncture when its safety rested upon their fidelity.

In the Ajengo diary of 1751 there is a curious record of how impossible it was for the English to hold any intercourse with the Portuguese without sustaining some injury.



The Portuguese bishop of Cochin was one Don Clement Joseph. He intrigued against the Dutch, who conquered that city, and they expelled him. The English had always some among their factors everywhere who leaned to the Church of Rome, or, at all events, considered it as the next best system to the Church of England. They were not such uncompromising Protestants as the citizens of the States-General. Don Joseph was welcomed with his priests and retinue to Ajengo, where shelter and succour were afforded him in his troubles, on the usual condition that he and his would be subject to the laws by which English citizens were bound. Don Joseph accepted the hospitalities sought so piteously and offered so generously, with protestations of gratitude and conformity to English interests. Scarcely had he been quietly located when he endeavoured to corrupt the English European soldiery, hoping to make proselytes of them, and thereby attach them to the Portuguese interests. This treacherous work was carried on so clandestinely that some success attended it before discovery prevented the further extension of mischief. The bishop was seized, and he and his associates were charged with acting as spies, and transmitting treasonable information as to the garrison, &c., to the Portuguese and French. They were placed as prisoners on board an English ship bound for Bombay. The bishop's intrigues were as active by sea as on land, and he laid a plan for the escape of his people, and for making the English captain its disloyal accessory. His schemes were again discovered, but no punishment was inflicted upon him, he was allowed to withdraw to a Portuguese settlement, taking with him his converts, whom he persuaded to transfer their allegiance from their own sovereign to that of Portugal. The English had had a very long experience of the Portuguese, their priests and superior clergy, and they might have concluded that their engagements would have been kept no longer than a chance of safety attended the violation, and that to pervert the minds of the troops, sow sedition, and betray the condition of the garrison to such of the rival powers as were Roman Catholic, would result, as a matter of course, for any indulgence accorded.

Dependent upon the government of Ajengo were several other factories on the Malabar coast, of less importance, but each of which had its exciting history. The French were the interlopers in these days, and stirred up the native rajahs against the minor as well as the major stations of the English traders. The author of *The East India Company's Factories in Malabar* gives a sketch of these

minor stations so brief, yet so pertinent and complete, that it conveys all that need be written upon the subject, and nearly all the reader would desire to know of these lesser agencies:—"At Brinjan was a banksal or storehouse, the English resident of which was jealously watched by the native chief, and not being permitted to raise a flagstaff, was fain to hoist the British colours on a tree. Ruttera, where a century before the English had a small factory, had long since been deserted by them, and although it was within the limits of the company's privileges, the French attempted to open a trade there. The chief of Ajengo immediately dispatched a corporal and ten privates in a manchau, together with another well-manned and well-armed boat, to seize the interlopers; but on the native rajah declaring that if the French were molested he would raise the country and destroy every man of the detachment, they hastily retraced their steps. The French afterwards sent an agent with three chests of treasure to Colletche, where he succeeded in opening a warehouse. At Eddava, half-way between Ajengo and Coulan, the English had a warehouse, the business of which was transacted by a Portuguese linguist, who did a little for them in the pepper trade, and a great deal for himself by intriguing with the natives. At Cotiote, although close to Tellicherry, there resided an European agent from the factory of Ajengo. Richard Secker was appointed to this post, and his brief occupancy is one of many examples to prove what must have been the miseries of faint-hearted civilians at that time. His residence, a native hut with a roof of rotten leaves, was an insufficient protection from the weather, and during the heavy rains he was compelled to shift his bed from place to place in the vain hope of finding a dry spot of rest; his single room served for kitchen, parlour, and all; at night it was overrun by vermin, and to his horror he frequently found himself bitten by rats. He had not a single companion, and, unable to converse fluently in the native language, was excluded even from the barbarous society of the place. His spirits gave way, and instead of purchasing pepper, his time was taken up with indicting accounts of his wretchedness, and petitioning to be removed."

The smallest stations dependent upon Tellicherry were more important. Carwar had been an early settlement of the company, and since they had been obliged to close it in 1720, they made repeated efforts to re-establish themselves there. The French offered every opposition which indirect influence could wield. The Portuguese, at the very time the English were compassionating them



elsewhere—affording them succour in some instances, and hospitality in many—were malignantly hostile to the re-establishment of the English at Carwar, and soon after the second half of the eighteenth century commenced, suddenly, in a time of peace, while the English were persecuted by the natives, appeared with a fleet off the coast, landed troops, attacked the English without summons to surrender, or declaration of war, and easily carried by their overwhelming numbers the fort on Peer Hill, from which the English had no means to dislodge them. The only moral defence the Portuguese offered was one which, if valid, justified war and a general attack upon the English settlements, but could not mitigate the atrocity in a time of peace of a wanton and cowardly attack with an overpowering force upon a weak and almost defenceless station. They alleged, after the old fashion, that they were the original traders to the East; that the English were interlopers; that, moreover, the latter were not the friends of the Jesuits, and had insulted them. This last charge was untrue; the English having rather petted that order, until their treachery and arrogance in many cases, and their treason in all, compelled their punishment or expulsion from British settlements. Horcawur and a few other small places were established or resuscitated about 1750—some of them rather before that date, and others shortly after; and in connection with one or two of these, events occurred which were exciting to the English and had some influence on their future fortunes, but the narrative of which falls properly within the relation of the occurrences of the second half of the century.

Students of Indian history have been struck with the coarseness of the English factors as compared with the first British settlers in India, and in comparison also with contemporary factors of other nations. The Dutch had at all their stations the humanizing influence of chaplains, who were selected for their piety, learning, and zeal, and who much restrained their flocks, who were probably as much given as the English to the vices of the day and of human nature in their circumstances. The administration of justice was, amongst Dutch, Danes, and French, far superior to what it was among the English. The Dutch lawyers were frequently very eminent.

International, maritime, and commercial laws were studied by the Dutch merchants, who in general intelligence and respectability much surpassed the English. The French were dissolute, but their manners were cultivated. They were hardly less sincere in the conflict of commerce and diplomacy, but they were much more polite than their British rivals. The correspondence between the French and English extant, places our countrymen in a far inferior position in point of education, manners, and good behaviour; the composition and even spelling of the English letters are barbarous. Probably there are no public letters of that day in existence so low-bred, vulgar, and ill-written as those of the English factors of Tellicherry, in reply to communications courteous and very elegantly expressed. There was a low, ruffianly tone about the correspondence of that day which contrasts painfully with the letters of the English factors of one hundred years before. This allegation has been made in several of the Indian periodicals, and a writer in one of the quarterlies thus puts it:—"In the Diary of Ajengo we notice the last traces of that excessive vulgarity which disfigures the mediæval, much more than the most ancient, records of the company. The manuscript—written, it should be observed, not by a clerk, but by the European secretary himself, and signed by the chief and council—abounds with such passages as the following:—'The other boat was *a cruizing* to the southward; we found in her a letter from *a black fellow* the French *keeps* at Caletche;' 'the moors are *a preparing* an army;' 'five sail of men-of-war were *a fitting* out to *releive* Commodore Bennett;' 'the king is *a going* to a feast;' 'we *were let known*' of a certain event. Everywhere the natives are designated 'black fellows;' what we now call a native apothecary was with the factors 'a black doctor;' a regiment of sepoys was 'a black regiment,' or 'a black battalion,' and, using a curious form of elliptical expression, they always styled the letters of native correspondents 'black advices.' Indeed this epithet *black* was long afterwards applied to natives even in official documents, and, as Mill indignantly remarks, Sir Elijah Impey could find no better title than 'black agents' for the native magistrates and judges of India."



## CHAPTER LXIV.

## MADRAS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE BREAKING OUT OF HOSTILITIES WITH THE FRENCH IN 1744.

ALTHOUGH towards the close of the first half of the eighteenth century events were of magnitude and importance at Madras, it was the duller portion of the company's settlements in India at the beginning of the century, and for many years after. The traders proceeded in their routine, buying and selling, sometimes quarrelling among themselves and oppressing one another, and sometimes enlivened by danger from without. The neighbourhood of Fort St. George was constantly a scene of contest amongst the native powers; but the factors had been long accustomed to that, and took no interest in the wars, and rumours of wars, which raged around them, except when their own interests and those of their employers were menaced.

The directions from London to the governor of Fort St. George were wise and peaceful; he was ordered on no account to mix himself up with the disputes of the petty rajahs in his vicinity, and to avoid all complications by political alliances, either with native princes or Europeans; while commercial covenants, based on mutual advantage, were to be sought and respected. That the directors were intent upon the peaceful and populous settlement of their territory around Fort St. George, is made evident by directions to promote the influx of industrious and quiet inhabitants, of whatever creed or race. The directors thus wrote to the council on this subject:—"What is of the last importance to us is, that the bounds be filled with useful inhabitants, and the only way to get and keep them is by a steady and constant, just and humane government, doing right to every one, and not suffering the voice of oppression to be heard, or so much as whispered in the streets. We hope Mr. Pitt has been careful, and will continue and persevere therein, which will be for his honour and our advantage. The increase of the inhabitants and of the revenues, and the lessening of the annual expense, will be to us the most convincing arguments of his good management, especially if thereto be added (as we expect) the due care of the investments."

There appears to have been well-organized local government. Charles Lockyer wrote, in 1711, "They have a mayor and aldermen, who exercise the same authority as in corporations in England. Quarrels, small debts, and other business of the meaner sort, are

decided by them at a court of six aldermen, held thrice a week in the town-hall. Black merchants commonly apply to this court, but Europeans usually seek favour of the governor. When any are not satisfied by the mayor's justice, they may appeal to a higher court, where for much money they have little law, with a great deal of formality. Here a judge allowed by the company presides, who on the report of a jury gives a final decree of European malefactors; they hang none but pirates, though formerly here have been men put to death for other crimes, whence I am apt to think that the governors had then great powers." He adds: "Lawyers are plenty, and as knowing as can be expected from broken linendrapers and other cracked tradesmen, who seek their fortunes here by their wits."\* Notwithstanding this advantage, the administration of justice was considered by the directors in London to be so deficient in Madras, and in India generally, that in 1726 they represented to his Majesty George the First, "that there was great want at Madras, Fort William, and Bombay, of a proper and competent authority for the more speedy and effectual administering of justice in civil causes, and for the trying and punishing of capital and other criminal offences and misdemeanors."† In result of this representation, measures were taken by the English government, by which many improvements, and unfortunately some abuses, were introduced in the three presidencies; the chief alterations affected Bombay, but Madras was also influenced by these new arrangements.

In the correspondence between the directors and the factors, the chief concern seems to have been how best the expenses of the establishments, civil and military, could be effected. In order to accomplish this, and to maintain an attitude of increased independence as well, the governor refused the usual presents to the nabob, and his conduct met the approbation of the directors.

In 1725 permission from the court of directors was given to the governor to rebuild the silver mint, but it was strictly ordered that there should be "no charge of ornaments," but that the money should be expended on the "useful and substantial." Writing of

\* Quoted in Kaye's *Administration of the East India Company*, part iii. chap. i.

† Auber's *Analysis*, p. 229.



"the east curtain at Fort St. David's, and the covering of the garden-house, and the Cudalore factory," the directors say—"It is a prodigious sum our buildings there and at Fort St. George have cost us, so that every motion for laying out more sounds harsh."

In 1732 a discussion ensued concerning the lowering of duties on trade, but the directors pleaded the state of finance at home against any reduction. This year measures were taken to induce large numbers of native weavers to settle at Madras, which circumstance mainly arose from the urgent advice of the directors some years before to "encourage the settlement of the natives within the bounds." Soon after there was great scarcity of rice, and consequent famine; the president and council of Fort St. George used the most active, politic, and humane exertions to mitigate the horrors of the crisis, and earned very strong expressions of approbation from the directors.

The Mahrattas harassed the president and council. To give a detail of their proceedings would be to repeat incidents too similar to those which have been recorded in connection with affairs in the sister presidency of Bombay. The English acted with great spirit in repelling all incursions, and refusing all demands for tribute,\* and the directors sus-

\* Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*. This authority has been frequently quoted during the progress of this work; it is therefore appropriate, while making our acknowledgments to its gifted author, to state that he died while our first edition was passing through the press. As few men have contributed more to a correct historical knowledge of Southern India than Mr. Duff, the reader will be interested in a short sketch of that author's own personal history. It is abridged from the *Banffshire Journal*, the editor of which, from his local connections, had peculiar sources of information as to the early life of Mr. Duff. His public services are well known to all persons acquainted with modern Indian history, as his writings are appreciated by all who are students of the history of the native races in India:—"The late Mr. J. C. Grant Duff was the eldest son of Mr. Grant, of Kincardine O'Neil, and was born in Banff on the 18th of July, 1789. One of the earliest recollections of his childhood was seeing his father dry before the fire the newspaper which contained the account of the execution of Louis XVI. (in 1793). Mr. Grant Duff was in the habit of telling many anecdotes of his early life in Banff, some of which were curiously illustrative of a state of things from which we are separated by half a century, which has produced more changes in the state of the country than any other in Scottish history. From Banff his mother removed to Aberdeen, where her son James was for some time at school, then for a longer period a student at Marischal College. It had been intended that he should proceed to India as a civil servant, but the arrangements which had been made towards this end fell through at the last moment, and, impatient of longer delay, the boy, then only sixteen years of age, accepted a cadetship and sailed for Bombay. After a short period of study at the cadet establishment he was ordered to join the Bombay Grenadiers. The first affair of impor-

tained their policy, lauded their measures, and incited their resolution.

The following letter of the 21st January, 1741, exemplifies this:—"The Mahrattas invading, overrunning, and plundering the Comorandel coast, give us a most sensible and deep concern, more especially as they come within our bounds, and sent you a most insulting message, tacked to an enormous and unheard-of demand, which you did well to

tance in which he was engaged was the storming of Maliah, a strongly fortified town, which was defended with the energy of despair by the crew of freebooters and cut-throats to whom it belonged. The party, commanded by Ensign Grant, then only nineteen years of age, was almost cut to pieces, and the adventures of their boy leader were of the most romantic description. It was not, however, till the close of the day's work that he had any idea of the desperate character of the service in which he had been engaged. 'This, I suppose,' he observed to an old officer, 'was mere child's play compared to Bhurtpore.' 'I doubt that,' answered his senior; 'the round shot at Bhurtpore were far worse than here, but, for snipping, I think this beat it.' Mr. Grant's careful attention to his duties did not remain entirely unrewarded. He became Persian interpreter to his regiment, as well as adjutant, at a very early period, and long before he quitted the regular line of the service his position and influence were far greater than his rank in the army would naturally have indicated. At last his day of good fortune dawned. The keen eye of Mountstuart Elphinstone, then resident in Poonah, saw in the young soldier an instrument fitted to his hand. He made Lieutenant Grant his assistant, in conjunction with Captain, afterwards Sir Henry Pottinger, and the friendship which then began between master and pupil remained unbroken till the death of the latter. He had not been long attached to Mr. Elphinstone when the Peishwa threw off the mask which had for some time indifferently concealed his bitter hostility to the English name. The residency was taken, plundered, and burnt. The decisive fight at Khirkee punished the insolence of the treacherous Mahratta, and a long train of operations, in which the subject of this memoir was constantly employed, partly in a military and partly in a civil capacity, completed his overthrow. It now remained to settle the country, and to this object Mr. Elphinstone immediately addressed himself. The unwearied labours and great abilities of his young assistant were rewarded by the 'blue riband of Western India,' the Residency of Sattara. He was not quite thirty years of age when he was sent, with only one European companion and a body of native soldiery, into the middle of the great and warlike province, which was the centre of the Mahratta confederacy. His mission was to bring order out of chaos, civilization out of barbarism, peace and prosperity out of war and desolation. How he grappled with his great task, and how he succeeded in these benevolent objects it would be long to trace. . . . The long and enthusiastic labours of Captain Grant soon broke down a constitution of no ordinary strength, and, after five years, his physicians insisted on his return to Europe, not as the means of buying health, but as absolutely essential to his existence. About two years after his return to this country he succeeded to the estate of Eden, which had descended to his mother while he was absent in the East. It was upon this occasion that he assumed the name of Duff. Mr. Grant Duff's first task, after returning to England, was to complete his *History of the Mahrattas*, a work in three octavo volumes, for which he had collected the materials at vast



answer from the mouths of our cannon, and thereupon to put yourselves in the most defensible posture; we hope that long before now the coast is well rid of them, and that the country powers have been roused to defend their subjects' property against all such formidable enemies in future; however that may be, you must by no means become tributary to, or suffer contributions to be levied upon us, either by the Moors or Mahrattas." Notwithstanding this high commendation, the directors considered that peace might not have been made on such advantageous terms, if the wisdom and courage of the president and council had not been acted upon from home:—"You will see how much we approve of your measures in making peace with the Mahrattas, at the same time we perceive if it had not been for our express orders, you would not have judged so well for our interests, by being overcome with your false fears. This may intimate to you how acceptable it would have been to us, had you pursued the same measures with respect to all other Indian powers."

The dangers of the English at Madras now thickened fast, and great preparations were made to avert them, by keeping on terms with the natives and strengthening the fortifications. The progress of the French, already described as so annoying in the Bombay presidency, was still more alarming in that of Madras. The coast of Coromandel and that of Malabar were both within the schemes of French and native ambition, and both were plundered by pirates, whose activity never tired, and who emerged from every defeat with fresh vigour. The position of Madras exposed it on either side to the apprehension of enemies, and the state of fear in which its peaceable inhabitants generally lived at this period was such as to make "life in Madras" by no means enviable. The greatest embarrassment of the president and council was the correspondence of the directors, whose orders were frequently expensive and with no small personal labour, amidst his public duties at Sattara. In 1825 he married the only child of Dr., afterwards Sir, Whitelaw Ainslie, the author of the *Materia Medica Indica*, and long well known in the scientific circles of Edinburgh and Paris. He then settled at Eden, and devoted himself for many years to improving—nay, we may almost say re-creating—his property. Till very recently we believe he never drew a farthing from the estate, but expended every year more than the entire income upon increasing its value and its desirability as a residence. Early in the year 1850 Mrs. Grant Duff succeeded to a small estate in Fifeshire, which had been long in her mother's family, whereupon her husband assumed the name and arms of Cunningham in addition to his own. Later in the same year the death of an uncle of Mrs. Grant Duff, the late Mr. Douglas Ainslie, added largely to the property of the family. The deceased leaves a daughter and two sons, the elder one member of parliament for the Elgin district of Burghs."

tradictory; and, while stimulating the factors and the garrison of Fort St. George to exertion, they blamed the smallest outlay, and even reduced, and, but for the urgent remonstrances of the president and council, would have still further lessened, the number of troops in Fort St. George, and the small maritime force kept off the coast. Thus they write at a period when, in Madras, men's minds were failing them from fear, in view of the vast interests at stake and the overwhelming number and power of their enemies:—"You will see that we are utterly averse to the keeping up of such a marine force as you require. We are unanimously of opinion the force we now allow you is sufficient for your safety and our purpose, which, in short, is our own defence and no further." This communication was made at a time when the directors were urging the president to send them all the information in their power about the French, and in a tone and style which betrayed great uneasiness. The directors would not lay out money for military purposes until their stations were on the verge of destruction. Everything—safety, honour, and their position in India, was risked rather than the expense of even a very moderate outlay for military purposes.

The president and council did not show such a mean and foolish jealousy of the military as was shown by the authorities at Bombay, and they consequently employed officers of intelligence in treating with the Mahrattas. For this, however, they received severe censure from the directors, who appear, at this juncture, to have entertained an intense jealousy, if not absolute dislike, of military men:—"We must also remark here our dissatisfaction at your employing none of our council in the important transactions with the Mahrattas and others, for notwithstanding any pretended superior capacities in those you did employ, we do not reckon military men proper judges of these affairs; but rather that they have a strong bias in their minds." The peace with the Mahrattas, which was concluded in July, 1739, between Mr. Law, governor of Bombay, on behalf of the company, and Bajee Rao, the first minister of "the most serene Sou Rajah," did not secure peace to the English in Madras any more than in Bombay. Its fourteen articles were all violated, in one way or other, by the Mahrattas. Sometimes the authority of the Sou Rajah was pleaded against that of the Bajee Rao, and often the agents of the latter, notwithstanding his well-known respect and admiration of the English, set at nought their obligations of duty to their master, and of peace to his ally.



The agents of Fort St. George seem to have taken considerable interest in the repression of the piracies of Angria, and the prevention of that tyrant's seizing the territory of the Siddees, for their letters to the directory at home, in 1735, acquaint their honours that Angria was "shut up," and in straits, in consequence of the measures taken against him. These representations do not well agree with such as were made by the council of Bombay, who knew Angria better than did that of Madras. Yet in the year following, the directors, in their general letter to Bengal, take for granted the representations made to them concerning Angria from Fort St. George, and base upon them expectations of economy.

At this time Madras was of considerable importance. Charles Lockyer, a little earlier, described it as "a port of the greatest consequence to the East India Company, for its strength, wealth, and great returns made yearly in calicoes and muslins." The fortifications were of considerable relative strength. The citadel had four bastions, and curtains, on which were mounted fifty-seven pieces of ordnance, one of which was a mortar. The main guard was the western, which was kept by "an officer's guard;" the eastern guard was maintained by a corporal's party. The English town was defended by batteries, crescents, and flankers; one hundred and fifty guns and three mortars were mounted here, and thirty-two guns on the outworks. Eight field pieces were ready to be employed around the fort as circumstances admitted or demanded.

The "Black City," where the natives resided, was beyond the fort, and surrounded with a brick wall of considerable height and great thickness. This separate town, as it virtually was, had a defence of artillery, and was well fortified. To the southward lay Magna Town, where the Mosullah boatmen lived, a hardy and venturous race.

Beyond these fortified environs the company held valuable territory. Within a circuit of about three miles lay villages called Egmore, New Town, Old Garden, &c., which were rented out to merchants or farmers. Lockyer says, viewing the whole of the city and suburbs, that it had "good fortifications, plenty of guns, and much ammunition." He further describes it as a "bugbear of the Moors, and a sanctuary to the fortunate people living in it."

There was a large church in Madras, which had some pretensions to architectural taste, the interior decorated with curious carved work; it had very large windows, and a fine organ. There were no bells, as the Brahmins regarded them with certain superstitious feel-

ings which it was deemed judicious not to countenance. There was a public library, which was at least respectable; and beneath the room in which the books were placed, a school was held, which was free. It is curious that there was a loan society for poor persons connected with the church; certain funds not required for ecclesiastical purposes being lent out to poor, industrious persons, at the rate, then low, of seven per cent.

The internal economy of Madras was such that some alleged the English drew as much revenue from Madras as the Dutch from Batavia, which Lockyer thought improbable. The writer last referred to gives as interesting sketches of Madras early in the eighteenth century as the Rev. Mr. Anderson, in his work on Western India, has given of Surat and Bombay up to that period from still earlier times. Writing of the revenues, he says:—"A seagato custom of £5 per cent. yielded 30,000 pagodas per annum; and a choultry, or land-custom of two-and-a-half per cent. on cloth, provisions, and other goods brought in from the country, yielded 4000 pagodas. Anchorage and permit dues, licences for fishing, arrack and wine, tobacco and beetle-nut farms, mintage, &c., furnished various sums." The income of the various officials furnished no temptations to retain their posts against their conscience:—"The governor had £200 a-year, with a gratuity of 100; of the six councillors, the chief had £100 per annum; the others in proportion—£70, £50, and £40 per annum; six senior merchants had annual salaries of £40; two junior merchants, £30; five factors, £15; ten writers, £5; two chaplains, £100; one surgeon, £36; two "essay masters," £120; one judge, £100; and the attorney-general, 50 pagodas. Married men received from 5 to 10 pagodas per month, as diet money, according to their quality; inferior servants, dining at the general table, had no other allowance beyond their salaries than a very trifling sum for washing, and oil for lamps."\* It is evident that the servants of the company could never have supported themselves at Madras, had it not been for their carrying on private traffic, which was as injurious to the interests of their employers as the like practice was elsewhere.

There was no name so prominent in Madras, during the early part of the eighteenth century, as Mr. Thomas Pitt. This gentleman has been sometimes confounded with his cousin, a Mr. Pitt who first went to India as an "interloper," then became an agent of the new or English Company, and afterwards was

\* Lockyer's *Trade of India*, p. 14.



known as "President" and "Consul Pitt." Mr. Thomas Pitt obtained celebrity for his prudence and good temper in the management of the affairs of the company in troublesome times. He was also made notorious by the possession of the celebrated "Pitt diamond." Captain Hamilton declared that it was obtained in a way not creditable. According to his account, a Mr. Glover saw it at Arcot, and induced the owner to offer it for sale to the English at Fort St. George, and that he placed in the owner's hand 3000 pagodas as a guarantee. The pledge was broken by Pitt, and the money forfeited by Glover. Much doubt has been thrown upon this story, as Hamilton was so thorough an asperser of the company and its servants; but on the other hand, Mr. Pitt's friends have never fairly accounted for his possession of this extraordinary gem.

The settlement of Madras, as well as those of Bombay and Surat, was troubled by Dutch fugitives and deserters, and by the insolent demands of those who made reclamation of them. The factors seem to have received all deserters—Dutch and French more particularly—who were disposed to serve in the ranks of the military. Some of these proved bad soldiers, and deserted again to some other power when opportunity served; but others, like many mercenaries in all nations, and in all times, were faithful to the service which they adopted, and proved good soldiers.

As the events connected with the Madras presidency during the portion of the eighteenth century which expired before the war broke out between the British and French settlements were less striking than those which made up the same period in the eastern and western presidencies, the space required for their treatment is proportionably small; accordingly, some subjects not alone applicable to Madras, but as much so to either of the other presidencies, may, with propriety, obtain notice here. In a chapter devoted to commerce the modern way of doing business in India was stated and explained; in the early part of the eighteenth century the mode was somewhat different, as were also the materials of trade. Then, especially at Madras, the products of the town were the grand subjects of export to England. The spice trade fell away during the eighteenth century, and so rapidly did the demand for spices fall in Europe, that the Dutch, who mainly relied upon it, were great sufferers. In some places the Batavian commerce was ruined, and so quickly did the prosperity and resources of the Dutch East India Company vanish, that when England found herself

crossing swords with France in India, it was a matter of little account in the great contest what part the Dutch might take, or whether they should take any. The English, while they dealt largely in pepper, and considerably in cloves, were more desirous to obtain dye stuffs, and the products of the weaver's shuttle; and the decline of the demand for spice in Europe did not therefore affect their commerce, except so far as it favoured it by removing the great spice merchants, the Dutch, from competition with the English in other matters. The swift decay of the resources of the Dutch prevented them from putting forth their energies in the departments of trade which flourished in the hands of the English; yet, at the beginning of the century, neither French nor British had a position of power, or a prospect of extensive and triumphant commerce, to be compared with the Hollanders.

The way in which commodities imported from Europe were disposed of at Madras and the cities of the other presidencies was by auction, the same mode as that adopted in London for the sale of oriental produce.

Previous to the breaking up of the Mogul empire the Europeans generally travelled some distance into the interior, or sent their goods thither by such reliable agency as they could find. There was then some protection, the chief danger being of plunder under the name of purchase by the native governors of the Mogul. But when the empire was sinking step by step to dissolution, there was little protection for goods sent into the interior, and this branch of commerce, by which the factors had personally profited, became greatly reduced. The English found their treaties with the Mahrattas of great value, and although these were often violated where territory was concerned, where ships were wrecked upon the coast, or where a chance of piracy was offered, yet they often secured the passage of goods by the hands of the native merchants to important marts and bazaars in cities far removed from the seaboard. At the very time the English at Calcutta were cutting the Mahratta ditch to intercept the cavalry of Bajee Rao, their countrymen both at Madras and Bombay were carrying on friendly intercourse, buying the products of the looms of Poonah, and sending thither, and all through the provinces of the Rajah of Sattara, the imports from England.

The agents of the company purchased the piece goods at the different cities where they were made; those agents were generally natives, as Europeans would have been in danger of being robbed, as indeed their native agents frequently were. When the goods



were brought to Madras, Calcutta, Bombay, Surat, and other ports, they were deposited in warehouses situated within a certain defined, and generally fortified space, called the factory. It was necessary to arm and discipline the inmates of the factories, and to place the buildings in situations affording scope for defence, also to loop-hole the walls of the warehouses and residencies, and fix strong embrasures to support cannon, so that in case of any oppression on the part of native rulers, or incursion of predatory tribes, the trading depot of the company might be also the citadel of the traders. The mode of bringing the weaver's work to market was exceedingly complicated. The whole process has been thus described:—"The European functionary, who, in each district, is the head of as much business as it is supposed that he can superintend, has first his banyan, or native secretary, through whom the whole of the business is conducted; the banyan hires a species of broker, called a gomash-tah, at so much a month: the gomash-tah repairs to the aurung, or manufacturing town, which is assigned as his station, and there fixes upon a habitation, which he calls his cutchery: he is provided with a sufficient number of peons, a sort of armed servants, and hircarahs, messengers or letter carriers, by his employer; these he immediately dispatches about the place, to summon to him the dallals, pycars, and weavers: the dallals and pycars are two sets of brokers, of whom the pycars are the lowest, transacting the business of detail with the weavers; the dallals again transact business with the pycars: the gomash-tah transacts with the dallals, the banyan with the gomash-tah, and the company's European servant with the banyan. The company's servant is thus five removes from the workman; and it may easily be supposed that much collusion and trick, that much of fraud towards the company, and much of oppression towards the weaver, is the consequence of the obscurity which so much complication implies. Besides his banyan, there is attached to the European agent a mohurrer, or clerk, and a cash-keeper, with a sufficient allowance of peons and hircarahs. Along with the gomash-tah is dispatched in the first instance as much money as suffices for the first advance to the weaver, that is, as suffices to purchase the materials, and to afford him subsistence during part, at least, of the time in which he is engaged with the work. The cloth, when made, is collected in a warehouse, adapted for the purpose, and called a kottah. Each piece is marked with the weaver's name; and when the whole is finished, or when it is convenient for the gomash-tah, he *holds a kottah*, as the business is called, when

each piece is examined, the price fixed, and the money due upon it paid to the weaver. This last is the stage at which chiefly the injustice to the workman is said to take place; as he is then obliged to content himself with fifteen or twenty, or often thirty or forty per cent. less than his work would fetch in the market. This is a species of traffic which could not exist but where the rulers of the country were favourable to the dealer; as everything, however, which increased the productive powers of the labourers added directly in India to the income of the rulers, their protection was but seldom denied."\*

The way in which the government of the factory and of the territory at Madras was conducted in the first half of the eighteenth century was, with some slight variations, identical with that of Calcutta and of Bombay. At that time each presidency was independent of the other. Up to the year 1707 the business of Calcutta had been diverted from Fort St. George, but after that date it was separate and independent. Each presidency corresponded directly with the directors in London. The governing body, or president and council, was composed of a body seldom less in number than nine, seldom more than twelve, including the president, according to the will of the directors in London. The members of council were selected from the superior civil servants, but occasionally, especially at Bombay, the chief military officer sat in council. Business was decided by majorities. The members of council also served in subordinate offices, indeed if they had not done so they could hardly have subsisted, so small were their salaries, and so profitless their honours. Doctor Hayman Wilson writes as accurately as strongly when he thus describes the condition of these men:—"There were no lucrative offices, for many years, under the company's administration. For some time the salaries of the chiefs of Bombay and Fort St. George, did not exceed £300 per annum, and those of merchants and factors were but £30 and £20 per annum. Even as late as the acquisition of all real power in Bengal, the salary of a councillor was £250 per annum; of a factor, £140; of a writer, as then lately increased, £130. The advantages made by the company's servants arose from their engaging in the internal trade, and also in the trade by sea to all eastern ports north of the equator, except Tonquin and Formosa. In either of those branches of trade much depended upon convenience of situation; and, so far, the company's servants were dependent upon the principal, with whom it rested where to employ

\* Mill, vol. iii. lib. iv. cap. 1.



them. The official emoluments attached to any situation were, in all cases, of small amount."

When members of the council were appointed to be chiefs of subordinate factories, they still retained their place in the council, and gave their voice in its affairs; this regulation, although a personal protection to the chiefs, and a support to their authority, was also a shield to their misdoings, especially when their private interests obtained more of their time and zeal than the service of the company. In fact, it was difficult, almost impossible, for a subordinate to obtain justice from an oppressive superior, or for a man not a member of council to make himself heard, and cause his wrongs to be redressed by the governing body. The president generally overruled the council, and well-nigh did as he pleased; and in few places during the history of oppression in this world have men been more hopelessly subject to tyrannical caprice than in the factories of the Honourable East India Company. Mill, quoting the select report of the committee of 1783, thus describes the functionaries and their investment with office and authority:—"The president was the organ of correspondence, by letter or otherwise, with the country powers. It rested with him to communicate to the council the account of what he thus transacted, at any time, and in any form, which he deemed expedient; and from this no slight accession to his power was derived. The several denominations of the company's servants in

India were, writers, factors, junior merchants, and senior merchants; the business of the writers, as the term, in some degree, imports, was that of clerking, with the inferior details of commerce; and when dominion succeeded, of government. In the capacity of writers they remained during five years. The first promotion was to the rank of factor; the next to that of junior merchant; in each of which the period of service was three years. After this extent of service, they became senior merchants; and out of the class of senior merchants were taken, by seniority, the members of the council, and when no particular appointment interfered, even the presidents themselves."

For one hundred years Madras had been the chief settlement of the British on the coast of Coromandel, and notwithstanding the rapid rise of Calcutta from the year 1717, it still retained great influence in India, and was famous for its population and riches all over the East. The territory of the English extended at least five miles along the coast. The treaty obtained by the Calcutta embassy in 1715-17 had given three villages to Madras, which were of value for their population and the fertility of the circumjacent country. Not less than a quarter of a million of inhabitants occupied the company's boundaries and owned its authority when the clarion of war was sounded, and Madras became a sharer and a sufferer in the grand tournament of France and England for ascendancy on the shores and plains of India.

## CHAPTER LXV.

### EVENTS IN BENGAL FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE BREAKING OUT OF HOSTILITIES WITH FRANCE IN 1744.

THE settlements in Bengal had steadily acquired importance during the closing years of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth centuries. The most notable thing in connection with that settlement during the early part of the eighteenth century was an embassy sent to the Emperor Ferokshere, then at Delhi, in 1715. Two of the most intelligent factors of the presidency were sent on this mission, which proved to be one of great results to the company. Several letters of these worthy envoys are still in existence, and deserve to be classed with the "curiosities of literature." The first of these communications which gives any detail is directed to the authorities at Calcutta, and is as follows:—"Our last to

your honours, &c., was from Agra the 24th ultimo, which place we left the same day. We passed through the country of the Jaats with success, not meeting with much trouble, except that once in the night, rogues came on our camp, but being repulsed three times, they left us. We were met on the 3rd July by Padre Stephanus bringing two Seerpaws, which were received with the usual ceremony by John Surman and Coja Surpaud. The 4th, we arrived at Barrapoola, three coss from the city, sending the padre before to prepare our reception, that if possible we might visit the king the first day, even before we went to the house which was got for us. Accordingly, the 7th, in the morning, we made our



entry with very good order, there being sent a munsabdar of two thousand munsub, with about two hundred horse and peons to meet us, bringing likewise two elephants and flags. About the middle of the city we were met by Synd Sallabut Caun Behauder, and were by him conducted to the palace, where we waited till about twelve o'clock, till the king came out, before which time we met with Caundora Behauder, who received us very civilly, assuring us of his protection and good services. We prepared for our first present, viz., one hundred gold mohurs; the table-clock set with precious stones; the unicorn's horn; the gold scrutoire bought from Tendy Caun; the large piece of ambergris; the affo, and chel-lumche manilla work; and the map of the world; these, with the honourable the governor's letter, were presented, every one holding something in his hand as usual. Considering the great pomp and state of the kings of Hindostan, we were very well received. On our arrival at our house, we were entertained by Synd Sallabut Caun, sufficient both for us and our people; in the evening he visited us again, and stayed about two hours. The great favour Caundora is in with the king, gives us hopes of success in this undertaking; he assures us of his protection, and says the king has promised us very great favours. We have received orders, first, to visit Caundora as our patron, after which we shall be ordered to visit the grand Vizier, and other Omrahs. We would have avoided this if we could, fearing to disoblige the Vizier; but finding it not feasible, rather than disoblige one who has been so serviceable, and by whose means we expect to obtain our desires, we comply with it. —*Delhi, or Shah Jehanabad, July 8th, 1715.* In another letter "their honours" are informed that the emperor had left Delhi, not considering that he had as much authority in his capital under the circumstances in which he fancied himself, as he would in some province of his empire. His majesty, under the pretence of worshipping at a peculiarly sanctified place, twenty coss from Delhi, got clear of the entanglements which environed him at his capital; and although the Omrahs petitioned him to return, and he moved round the city eight or ten days, he finally located himself at a distance, and thence issued his orders. The ambassadors followed him, and experienced many and great difficulties in the performance of their arduous task, not the least of which was the neglect of their superiors, who left them without remittances until they were reduced to the greatest necessities, and at last respectfully wrote, dated *twenty coss from Delhi, 4th August, 1715*, that unless they received supplies of money they

could not go on with their business, and intimated that if not provided with means of performing the duties imposed upon them they must sink to the last straits. It is not recorded what reply "their honours" made to their ambassadors in distress, but it is to be supposed some money was sent, for they "went on with their business." It is impossible for any student of the company's proceedings at this period not to be struck with the mean and despicable parsimony which was constantly exhibited not only without real economy, but causing in the long run very extensive loss. Yet, besides this unjust and greedy penuriousness, might be frequently seen a shameful extravagance where the greater personages were concerned.

In a letter dated Delhi, Nov. 3, 1715, the envoys inform their employers of the dangerous illness of his majesty, and the success which attended the efforts of a medical man who accompanied them in restoring his health. The native physicians had been called in without avail, and his majesty was reduced to much distress of mind, as his marriage to a princess of renowned beauty was to have taken place at that time, and he was extremely impatient of its postponement. When all hope of recovery through the usual court physicians had failed, Mr. Hamilton, the English surgeon, was invited to prescribe for his majesty. The disease was happily one within the management of the faculty, and in a very few days the emperor was pronounced convalescent. Coja Surpaud, the native gentleman under whose auspices the envoys had travelled and been presented to court, was thanked by the emperor, and many encomiums upon the wisdom and science of his friends the English were used by the Mogul.

Again, on December 7th, the ambassadors directed a letter from Delhi to their superiors at Calcutta, in which a most curious account is given of the complete recovery of the emperor, and his gratitude to Mr. Hamilton. The following extract cannot fail deeply to interest the reader:—"The king was pleased the 30th to give him in public, viz. a vest, a culgee set with precious stones, two diamond rings, an elephant, horse, and 5000 rupees, besides ordering, at the same time, all his small instruments to be made in gold, viz. gold buttons for coat, waistcoat, and breeches, set with jewels: the same day Coja Surpaud received an elephant and vest as a reward for his attendance on this occasion. Monsieur Mart was to have received a reward the same day with Mr. Hamilton; but considering it was not for the credit of our nation to have any one joined with him, especially since he had no hand in the business, we got his reward



deferred till three days afterwards, when he had a vest, an elephant, and 1000 rupees; a favour purely owing to his majesty's generosity, and because he was his servant. We have esteemed this a particular happiness, and hope it will prove ominous to the success of our affairs, it being the only thing that detained us hitherto from delivering our general petition; so pursuant to the orders we received from Caundora, the king's recovery was succeeded by the giving in the remainder of our present (reserving a small part only till the ceremony of his marriage should be over), and then delivered our petition to Caundora, by his means to be introduced to his majesty. Synd Syllabut Caun, who has all along managed our affairs under Caundora, being at that instant and some time before much indisposed, we were obliged to carry it ourselves, without taking care to have his recommendation annexed. Since the delivery, Coja Surpaud has been frequently with Caundora, to remind him of introducing it to his majesty, but has always been informed no business can go forward till the solemnization of the king's wedding is over, when he has promised a speedy dispatch. All offices have been shut up for some days, and all business in the kingdom must naturally subside to this approaching ceremony; so that we cannot repine at the delay."

The result of the singular providence which attended this embassy was the issue of a firman (a phirmaund), before the close of the year 1715, conferring additional privileges upon the company, and giving far better security for freedom of commerce than any previous firman. When the directors at home heard of this great success, new arrangements were made conferring upon their servants at Calcutta new dignity and privilege. By anticipation Bengal has been called a presidency; but it was not until 1707 that it was so ranked, and not until after the events at Delhi turned to such prosperous account for his employers by the patriotic and gifted Hamilton, that Calcutta was regarded by any as the probable seat of the company's Indian government, the president and council of which should one day preside over the affairs of India, and be only responsible to the directors in London.

The success of the ambassadors excited the envy of the imperial politicians, as that of Mr. Hamilton excited the envy of the native medical practitioners. A train of events was laid by the jealousy thus caused, which issued in war to both natives and English, and in defeat, disaster, and subjugation to the former, as in victory and conquest to the latter.

Jaffer Khan (or, as some write it, Jaffier Chaun) held the government of Bengal under

his imperial majesty. The office was not only one of great honour, but of power almost sovereign, and the influence of Jaffer at the imperial court was paramount. His conduct towards the English was unjust and cruel. He was determined, if possible, to render nugatory the privileges of the imperial firman, without involving himself in the displeasure of the Mogul by a direct refusal to put in force his orders. Before the ambassadors left Delhi they had some knowledge of this state of affairs, and on their return at Cossimbazar, they addressed the council at Calcutta on the subject, with whom they had previously corresponded, as to what was best to be done so as to yield nothing to the khan and in no respect offend the emperor.

*"Cossimbazar, August 15, 1717.*

"We are entirely of your opinion that you ought not to acquiesce in Jaffer Cawn's (Khan) refusing obedience to the king's royal orders, nor sit quiet under his disobedience of them; we never entertained such imaginations, but rather that he ought to be compelled to it by such means as your honour thinks best. You are sensible that no black servant in the country dare speak with that peremptoriness to so great a man as Jaffer Cawn, as sometimes the nature of our affairs require, on which consideration we ourselves went in person to him, and showed him the phirmaund, and demanded the free use of the mint as before advised. Mr. Feake disputed the point himself with Jaffer Cawn in the Hindostan language, face to face, Eckeram Cawn Duan and others being present, with ten or a dozen munsuddars and several of the mutsuddies, in a public court, who were all eye and ear witnesses to the smart and warm replies Mr. Feake at last made him: the whole durbar was surprised, and several whispered to Coja Delaun with a seeming fear in what the dispute might end. Jaffer Cawn remained silent for some time, and then ordered beetle to be brought, and dispatched us with a few sweetening words, that he would rest satisfied he should not be our enemy, but see what was to be done, and the like, which is a customary cajole he uses to get rid of company he don't like, as was plain he did not ours, for he never had so much said to his face since he has been a duan or subah, nor does he usually give any one such an opportunity. Nothing that was necessary to be said or done remained, but giving the duhoy, which experience has taught us is of no value with Jaffer Cawn, who suffers nothing to be sent to court without being read and approved by him: those officers dare as well eat fire, as send anything unknown to him. Our vakeel, though an elderly man, and possibly not so brisk as some others, yet he has the character of the boldest vakeel in this durbar; he once before did give the duhoy, and shall do it again, if your honour, &c., please to give orders; but we crave leave to offer some reasons we have against doing it at this juncture."

The khan was incensed against the bold spoken Englishmen, conceived against their nation an intense hatred, and determined to thwart their interests at all risks. The English counterplotted his excellency with considerable skill, and were well supported in their efforts by wily natives, whose diplomatic temper caused them to enter with zest into the cause of the English, when once their interests



were engaged. Curious disclosures were made, and prompt information given to the English, so that the actions of the khan were well spied; but the conduct of the superior officers at Calcutta was neither so skilful nor active—so bold, nor yet so cautious, as that of their subordinates, whose duty it was to take part in these transactions. The success of the English in this most important of their diplomatic affairs, at all events previous to the great French war, has been attributed to a bribe opportunely given to a eunuch in the service of either the vizier or the emperor, and constantly in attendance upon the durbar. Mill and Wilson sanction this opinion, and give the following account of the mode by which they ultimately secured the concessions sought—the abuse on the part of the English traders of those privileges, the decisive suppression by the native government of Bengal of these abuses, the consequent enterprises of the English in the coasting trade, and the rapid development of Calcutta, its commerce, and its power as the result:—"The power of the vizier could defeat the grants of the emperor himself; and he disputed the principal articles. Repeated applications were made to the emperor, and at last the vizier gave way; when mandates were issued confirming all the privileges for which the petition had prayed. To the disappointment, however, and grief of the ambassadors, the mandates were not under the seals of the emperor, but only those of the vizier, the authority of which the distant viceroys would be sure to dispute. It was resolved to remonstrate, how delicate soever the ground on which they must tread; and to solicit mandates to which the highest authority should be attached. It was now the month of April, 1716, when the emperor, at the head of an expedition against the Sikhs, began his march towards Lahore. No choice remained but to follow the camp. The campaign was tedious. It heightened the dissensions between the favourites of the emperor and the vizier; the ambassadors found their difficulties increased; and contemplated a long, and probably a fruitless negotiation, when they were advised to bribe a favourite eunuch in the seraglio. No sooner was the money paid than the vizier himself appeared eager to accomplish their designs, and the patents were issued under the highest authority. There was a secret, of which the eunuch had made his advantage. The factory of Surat, having lately been oppressed by the Mogul governor and officers, had been withdrawn by the presidency of Bombay, as not worth maintaining. It was recollected by the Moguls that, in consequence of oppression, the factory of Surat had once before been withdrawn; immediately

after which an English fleet had appeared, had swept the sea of Mogul ships, and inflicted a deep wound upon the Mogul treasury. A similar visitation was now regarded as a certain consequence; and, as many valuable ships of the Moguls were at sea, the event was deprecated with proportional ardour. This intelligence was transmitted to the eunuch by his friend the viceroy of Gujerat. The eunuch knew what effect it would produce upon the mind of the vizier; obtained his bribe from the English: and then communicated to the vizier the expectation prevalent in Gujerat of a hostile visit from an English fleet. The vizier hastened to prevent such a calamity by granting satisfaction. The patents were dispatched; and the ambassadors took leave of the emperor in the month of July, 1717, two years after their arrival. The mandates in favour of the company produced their full effect in Gujerat and the Deccan: but in Bengal, where the most important privileges were conceded, the subahdar, or nabob as he was called by the English, had power to impede their operations. The thirty-seven towns which the company had obtained leave to purchase would have given them a district extending ten miles from Calcutta on each side of the river Hoogly; where a number of weavers, subject to their own jurisdiction, might have been established. The viceroy ventured not directly to oppose the operation of an imperial mandate; but his authority was sufficient to deter the holders of the land from disposing of it to the company; and the most important of the advantages aimed at by the embassy was thus prevented. The nabob, however, disputed not the authority of the president's dustucks, a species of passport which entitled the merchandise to pass from duty, stoppage, or inspection; and this immunity, from which the other European traders were excluded, promoted the vent of the company's goods. The trade of the company's servants occasioned another dispute. Besides the business which the factors and agents of the company were engaged to perform on the company's account, they had been allowed to carry on an independent traffic of their own, for their own profit. Every man had in this manner a double occupation and pursuit; one for the benefit of the company, and one for the benefit of himself. Either the inattention of the feebly interested directors of a common concern had overlooked the premium for neglecting that concern, which was thus bestowed upon the individuals intrusted with it in India, or the shortness of their foresight made them count this neglect a smaller evil than the additional salaries which their servants, if debarred from other sources of emolument, would



probably require. The president of Calcutta granted his *dustucks* for protecting from the duties and taxes of the native government, not only the goods of the company, but also the goods of the company's servants; and possibly the officers of that government were too little acquainted with the internal affairs of their English visitants to remark the distinction. The company had appropriated to themselves, in all its branches, the trade between India and the mother country. Their servants were thus confined to what was called 'the country trade,' or that from one part of India to another. This consisted of two branches, maritime and inland; either that which was carried on by ships from one port of India to another, and from the ports of India to the other countries in the adjacent seas; or that which was carried on by land between one town or province and another. When the *dustucks* of the president, therefore, were granted to the company's servants, they were often granted to protect from duties, commodities, the produce of the kingdom itself, in their passage by land from one district or province to another. This, Jaffer Khan, the viceroy, declared it his intention to prevent, as a practice at once destructive to his revenue, and ruinous to the native traders, on whom heavy duties were imposed; and he commanded the *dustucks* of the president to receive no respect, except for goods either imported by sea, or purchased for exportation. The company remonstrated, but in vain. Nor were the pretensions of their servants exempt from unpleasant consequences; as the pretext of examining whether the goods were really imported by sea, or really meant for exportation, often produced those interferences of the officers of revenue, from which it was so great a privilege to be saved. Interrupted and disturbed in their endeavours to grasp the inland trade, the company's servants directed their ardour to the maritime branch; and their superior skill soon induced the merchants of the province, Moors, Armenians, and Hindoos, to freight most of the goods which they exported on English bottoms. Within ten years from the period of the embassy, the shipping of the port of Calcutta increased to ten thousand tons."

The terms of the *firman* were, that the cargoes of English ships wrecked on the Mogul coasts should be preserved from plunder; that a fixed sum should be received at Surat in lieu of all duties; that three villages contiguous to Madras, which had been granted and again reserved by the government of Arcot, should be restored in perpetuity; that the island of Diu, near the port of Masulipatam, should be given to the company for

an annual rent; that all persons in Bengal who might be indebted to the company should be delivered up to the presidency on the first demand; that a passport (*dustuck*), signed by the president of Calcutta, should exempt the goods which it specified from stoppage or examination by the officers of the Bengal government; and that the company should be permitted to purchase the zemindarship of thirty-seven towns, in the same manner as they had been authorized by Azeem-oos-Shaun to purchase Calcutta, Suttanuttu, and Govindpore.

The directors at home, while much pleased with the new advantages derived through Mr. Hamilton at Delhi, were very anxious that economy should be practised in Calcutta, that attention should be directed to the revenues, and all possible care taken to make no acquisition of territory beyond that which had already fallen to them. The company was very solicitous that its military strength at Calcutta should be reduced; but this, it appears, the agents positively refused, on the ground of the necessity of troops to maintain freedom of commerce and personal security. Various significant events occurred, the detail of which need not encumber these pages, which soon proved the wisdom of the president and council of Calcutta in this particular. On the 3rd of February, 1719, the directors wrote, actually forbidding their officers to take possession of the territory granted by the late *firman*, but only so much of it as lay above and below the town on the river at both sides. On other subjects the following extract shows the spirit of the company at that juncture:—"We come now to take notice of that which we must always have a due regard to, viz., the articles of our revenue. We need not repeat the reasons; we have often mentioned them. The assurances you have given us, that you will, and still do, continue to enlarge our revenues all you possibly can without oppression, and faithfully promise your utmost endeavours, as well to augment them as diminish the expenses, excepting that of the military, which you would not lessen, are so many acceptable instances of your care and zeal for our service. We can desire no more, but to see these promising blossoms ripening into fruit. We would not have them enlarged by oppressing any, the poorest person; and allow the reason you give for continuing your military, that it is the best argument you can use for supporting our privileges and the trade, to be very substantial; the experience at Cossimbazar, and on bringing down your goods, are pregnant instances of it, among many others."

On the 16th of February, 1721, the directors



again wrote to the president and council at Calcutta, urging them to use whatever address opportunity afforded to obtain the privileges granted in the firman of 1715, but not to claim any territory, if the distance at which it lay from Calcutta was inconvenient, as trade, not territory, was the company's object. In that letter the directors review the political position of Bengal with much astuteness, and compare the pretensions and prospects of Hyder Cooly Khan and Jaffer Khan with intelligence and foresight. These two influential natives were rivals for political power: Jaffer Khan had the advantage of long-acquired influence in Bengal, and a strong party, who were inspired, by terror of his energy and cruelty, and by identity of interest, to serve him in all extremes. Cooly Khan was a favourite with the emperor and a friend of the English. When viceroy at Surat, he caused the firman in favour of the English to take effect there, in spite of the opposition of formidable native influences and the intrigues of the rival European powers. There was some probability of his succeeding Jaffer Khan in the government of Bengal. The president and council had advised the directors of the contending claimants for power and the modes in which they were conducting their contention, asking for counsel as to the impending crisis. The company, in reply, left matters pretty much to the discretion of its officers, except as to the non-acquisition of any lands that were not of some immediate necessity to the preservation of their trade. As usual, the most impressive obligations are laid on the council to spend no money for any purpose, if by possibility such expenditure could be avoided, and, at all events, to consume no money in the rival intrigues of the two khans, until it might be seen, with some certainty, how the competition would end: in such case, they were not to offend Jaffer, if power lay with him; but if there were any chance that Hyder Cooly might turn him out, then the council must support their own friend with all means at their disposal. Such was the policy of the directors, and it probably harmonised with that of the council at Calcutta, judging not only from the course pursued by the latter, but from the spirit in which it was followed.

It is singular that while, in 1857-8, certain parties accused the company of never having paid attention to public roads, in the correspondence of the directors with their president at Calcutta, in 1721, an anxiety for covering with roads the territory then subject to them is clearly expressed. Nor would it be difficult to prove that ever since, except when the ravages of war or the failure of crops de-

solated the country, or when the revenue, from these or other causes, was exhausted, the directors at home have always been solicitous to open up facile communications through their territories. One difficulty, at this early period, presented itself, that the native powers either chose to take offence, or to claim compensation for danger or injury supposed or pretended by them, in consequence of creating highways.

The following is a specimen of the policy which, in 1722, the directors desired to be observed towards the native governors in Bengal: it is taken from the "general letter to Bengal," written on the 14th of February, in that year. Considering that this counsel is given at a time when the council of Calcutta had assured the directors that it was "pretty easy with the country government," it indicates that, in the opinion of the directors, the time was approaching when gentle measures must be seconded by decision and force, if their interests with the governors of provinces and petty rajahs, who took upon themselves more than the authority assumed by the Mogul, were to be considered. The blending of diplomacy and decision, finesse and force, which this document commends, must be very edifying to modern adepts in Indian policy, and modern censors of Indian politicians:—"The account you give us of being pretty easy with the country government, notwithstanding the unsettled condition of the country, is acceptable, and much more your proceedings in clearing Contoo, the Cossimbazar broker, when seized by the nabob, and your boats when stopped by the several chookies. These are so many new proofs of the necessity of putting on a face of power and resolution, as we have often mentioned, to recover our privileges when openly infringed, and softer methods and applications for redress prove ineffectual, and that even the country government are afraid when you give them the duhoy in a prudent manner, and on well-grounded occasion. Yearly experience shows you that they are always watching for opportunities to get money out of you, as in the dispute of your making the road for the benefit of your towns. Let it be your constant care (as hitherto, by what appears, it has been), to give them no just handles if possible. We need not add (because it hath been often recommended to you), that you continue to keep fair with the Hoogly government, which, with a little prudence, may be done at a cheap rate, even your usual piscohes. Be equally careful to keep up a good understanding with the nabob, so as good words and a respectful behaviour, without paying too dear for it, will contribute. Is there no likelihood of contracting a friendship with one or more of his favourites, to



make your way to, and the obtaining your requests from, him more easy? Such things have been practised formerly, and particularly by President Eyres, who, by his intimacy with Mirza Mudusfa, first obtained the grant of your towns."

In 1726 a Mayens court was established in Calcutta, mainly on the model of that originally instituted at Madras. It does not appear that it produced as much satisfaction in Calcutta as courts of a similar nature in the capitals of the sister presidencies.

In 1725 Jaffer Khan, the enemy of the English, died, and was succeeded by Sujah Khan, his son-in-law, who established his government in Moorshedabad, then a large, populous, and trading city, and, in many respects, well adapted to be the capital of Bengal. Ally Verdi Khan, one of his onrahs, accompanied him, remaining constantly by him, and exercising influence over his mind. In 1729 Ally was appointed governor of Behar, which place, together with Orissa, had been first united with Bengal under the government of Jaffer Khan. Ally Verdi was an intriguing and dexterous man, and, by a bold stroke of policy, suddenly given, but long prepared, he had himself proclaimed as the Nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. These events were gradually opening the way for the development of greater changes, which were soon destined to pass over the lower provinces of India.

For several years the chief features of events in Bengal were those which marked the progress of trade. Efforts were made to prevent the natives from inroads upon the Calcutta territory, without necessitating armed collisions. Endeavours were put forth to outwit the native diplomatists, whose treachery and chicanery were so much a delight to those endowed with these aptitudes, that they appeared to practise them for the enjoyment their exercise afforded, when nothing for their masters or themselves could be gained by such practices.

The administration of the Bengal territory was at this time kind and prudent on the part of the directors at home, and, so far as their intentions were carried out, was beneficial as well as benevolent to the natives. Thus when, in 1738, a fierce storm swept over Calcutta, damaging houses and fields, and carrying destruction to hut and homestead, the directors thus address their agents:—"We approve of your relieving the inhabitants, on their suffering by the storm the loss of their dwellings and great part of their substance, and in forbearing to collect the revenues of the poor people in the town for some time." In the succeeding year, when famine smote wherestorm had desolated, the council afforded

extensive relief to the natives, and obtained for so doing the approbation of their employers, who thus addressed its members:—"You did well in prohibiting the exportation of rice on the scarcity; the welfare of the place, on all such melancholy occasions, must be first and principally regarded. We cannot but acquiesce, on so general a calamity, in your taking off the duty on all rice brought into the town; and approve of buying a parcel with our money, to deliver out in small parcels at the bazaar rate."

Events now occurred of warlike importance to Bengal and to the English. It will be recollected by the reader that Sevajee, the daring Mahratta, overran the greater part of Hindostan. In the year 1735 the Mahrattas obtained authority to collect a fourth part of the revenues of the empire, except in Bengal. In 1739 Nizam-ool-Moolk, the subahdar of the Deccan, became jealous of the growing ambition and power of Ally Verdi, the nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, as before related. The nizam instigated the Mahrattas to demand the *chaut* (fourth part of the revenue) for Ally. They soon advanced from Poonah and Berar, concentric points of their power and resources, to Burdwan. The celebrated Bajee Rao, already brought before the reader when narrating the events which occurred on the opposite shores of the peninsula during this period, was the leader of the fierce hordes of the invaders, assisted by his commander-in-chief, also brought before the reader's notice while relating the history of the Bombay presidency. The wild Mahrattas swept over Bengal, as the descending waters of the Ganges or the Brahmapootra deluge the plains in the rainy season. The feeble inhabitants of Bengal displayed no capacity even for flight, and in great numbers fell victims to famine or wild beasts in the jungle.

The English at Calcutta took advantage of the occasion to demand from the nabob permission to build some field works around their territory. These, when completed, were of the simplest kind, chiefly suitable for intercepting horsemen and artillery. The circuit of these works was called the Mahratta Ditch, and extended for seven miles around Calcutta, along the bounds of the territory then recognised by the nabob as belonging to the company. Ally Verdi was a man of resolution and energy; he recruited his forces, and in the following year, by the aid of men from the upper provinces, attacked the Mahrattas, who were spread over his territory. These, as the floods retiring after the monsoon find vent in the current of the great rivers, rapidly concentrated, and retreated to the shores of



Malabar and the valleys of the Deccan. Ally Verdi had been out of favour with the Mogul, because of his ambition, and his seizure of Behar and Orissa, but he was now restored to the light of the imperial countenance, petted, and rewarded by an ostensible recognition of all the titles and powers he had rebelliously assumed. On his part, engagement was made to send to Delhi a considerable tribute annually.

In the interval of space which followed, the council at Calcutta was agitated by questions connected with the administration of justice, more particularly the taking of oaths; Brahmins, Mussulmans, and others refusing to be sworn in the modes most agreeable to the English. These difficulties, and the disputes and denials of justice which arose out of them, were settled by the directors at home sending out specific regulations for such matters, which were liberal and enlightened.

During the progress and solution of these affairs the French were, in every direction towards which they operated, gaining ascendancy over the native mind. The chiefs and rajahs had believed the English irresistible at sea, until Angria and other pirates contended with them so successfully; but just before the bursting forth of the war with France that opinion had somewhat abated, although still the English war ships were esteemed as, at least, equal to those of the Dutch and superior to those of any other power. As traders, the Dutch stood first and the English second in order; but the formation of companies at Ostend and in Prussia, as well as in Denmark, which was soon understood by several of the native powers, led to the belief that there were other European nations which, as traders, and perhaps as mariners, might rival the British. The French were considered inferior to the English both as mer-

chants and sailors, although in the latter capacity they at last acquired, by the conduct of Labourdonnais, a rapid fame. As soldiers, the English were esteemed by the natives to be prompt, obstinate, and brave in battle, but inferior to the French in taste for the profession of arms, and in the science of war. The natives believed that the English were fighting shopkeepers; but they regarded the French as cavaliers, as men above the mere instincts of trade, and who, like the natives themselves, considered the profession of arms a renown: they were esteemed as the Rajpoots of Europeans. The every-day carriage and air of the Frenchman were *à la militaire*, while those of the Englishman, even when decked in uniform, were brusque, ungainly, and gave the impression of the shop. These were the real feelings of the natives. They could readily credit any account of obstinate battle maintained by Englishmen, but that they could launch forth armies on a great field as Frenchmen could, or as the generals of the great Mogul might be supposed able to do, was beyond credibility. A little time soon dissipated these impressions. The short quietude which Bengal saw after the Mahrattas had fled before the skilful arrangements and attacks of Ally Verdi was like the dropping of the curtain between the scenes in the drama: that curtain was soon to rise on a more eventful act, involving scenes more varied and startling than India had witnessed; and from amidst the transitions and tumults caused by the passing of armies, and the thunder of European war on Indian fields, the English were destined to come forth the heroes and the victors, before whom Indian and European were forced to bow, as the native shrub and the exotic together shed their foliage and drop their branches before the path of the resistless storm.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGULAR NAVY AT BOMBAY, AND OF REGULAR MILITARY FORCES IN BOMBAY, MADRAS, AND BENGAL.

In previous chapters notice has been taken incidentally of the formation of military establishments at Bombay, and of the employment of armed boats and ships to protect the harbour and the commercial transactions conducted in the Indian Ocean.

The earlier occupation of Bombay entitles it to more especial as well as prior attention in this matter, as compared with the

other presidencies. Indeed the only one of the three presidencies which arrived at the dignity of maintaining a regular navy was Bombay, although Bengal had a marine service which more resembled a mercantile than a warlike navy. Madras possessed no maritime establishment. The Bombay navy protected the coast of Malabar, as well as the commercial interests of England and India



in the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, and the Indian Ocean. The Bengal marine was of service along the Coromandel coast, and throughout the Bay of Bengal.

In previous chapters the progress of the company's mercantile marine has been related with ample detail, and the warlike operations of merchant ships in the seventeenth century, and those in the early part of the eighteenth century conducted by "grabs" and "gallivats," depicted. It has been seen that the company's martial marine (if it deserved the name) was in a low condition as to the number of ships, men, and guns in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, but the quality of both men and material was excellent. It is very difficult to supply the place of good sailors and experienced officers in time of war, if during peace a country, on the ground of economy, discharges them. The East India Company did not think so when, in 1742, a peaceful period, the economical merchants of the directory resolved to retrench by discharging seamen, and "putting ships out of commission,"—as we say in modern phraseology. The reductions were intended to be more considerable than became actually the case, for the president and council were slow to reduce the maritime power of the presidency, and by references home of one sort or other, postponed the evil day. At last the economical arrangements were effected, and the abridged navy of Bombay assumed the following dimensions. There were—"A superintendent, eight commanders, (one of whom was styled commodore), three first lieutenants, four second lieutenants, four third officers, and six masters of gallivats. The superintendent's salary was £220 per annum; a commander's, from 60 to 80 rupees per mensem; a first lieutenant's from 32 to 40; a second lieutenant's, 24; a midshipman's, 12; a surgeon's, from 31 to 40; a gunner's or boatswain's, 22; a carpenter's, 26; an able seaman's, 9; a native officer's, 10; a marine topass's, 6; and a lascars, 5. Amongst the ships, ranked first 'the fighting vessels,' the principal of which were two grabs, called the *Restoration* and *Neptune's Prize*, the former being manned by eighty Europeans of all ranks, and fifty-one lascars; the latter, by fifty Europeans and thirty-one lascars. On each of the prahims there had usually been thirty Europeans and twenty lascars; but these numbers were now slightly diminished. As frequent complaints of favouritism were made by the officers, it was at last resolved that promotions should be regulated according to dates of commissions."\*

The result of these reductions, so far from being a saving of money, as was expected by the directors at home, was a source of loss, and of great danger to the trade with India. The coasting trade was at last stopped, in consequence of the daring piracies effected by Arabs, Mahrattas, Europeans, &c. The *Bombay Quarterly* gives a brief sketch of the disasters which followed the reduction, before matters arrived at a crisis, in the following terms:—"An immediate consequence of these reductions was, that the mercantile marine, now larger than ever, suffered serious losses from pirates, and the company received some severe blows. The *Tiger*, a gallivat, when disabled by a waterspout, on her passage from Gombroon, was boarded by subjects of the Siddee at Mufdagarbad. Her crew, after a severe conflict in which seven fell, were overpowered, and she was carried away as a prize; but on a proper representation being made to the Siddee of Jinjeera, whom the Siddee of Mufdagarbad acknowledged as lord paramount, she was restored. Near the port of Surat cooly rovers swarmed, and waited for their prey as the ships lying at the bar attempted to discharge their cargoes. The treaty which had been made with Khem Sawunt was, as soon as the government of Bombay was supposed to be without power, shown to be waste paper, for in spite of it that chief made prizes of seven boats valued at eighteen or nineteen thousand rupees. The Malwans seized others valued at ten or eleven thousand. The subjects of the Peishwa showed themselves equally rapacious, and although their government, when appealed to, promised that the offenders should be punished, it was only on the improbable supposition that they could be discovered and convicted. Even Menajee Angria, whilst professing to be a close ally of the British, countenanced his subjects in attacking their vessels, and never hesitated to pick up a stray boat, if he could hope to escape detection; yet on one occasion he rendered a valuable service in rescuing the *Salamander*, an English ketch, which had been captured off Colaba by the fleet of Sumbhajee Angria. Seven grabs and eight gallivats, in the service of the last mentioned pirate, after fighting for a night and day with the *Montague* and *Warwick*, two East Indiamen, carried off five boats and a Portuguese ketch sailing under their convoy. A vessel, however, which he had taken and sold for ten thousand rupees, was recaptured by Captain Charles Foulis, of the *Harrington*. But nothing could compensate the merchants of Bombay for the losses they had sustained." Under such circumstances, they held meetings and made representations to government of their desperate state. So great was the in-

\* *Bombay Diary*, 13th Aug., and 26th Nov., 1742; and 16th Feb., 1743. *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.



security, that the bankers would make no advances upon goods or ships. The diaries of Bombay, Surat, and Tellicherry abundantly prove that such was the condition of affairs. The peace principle was carried out into a fair experiment, and its most ardent admirers could not fail to admit that if carried out a little longer, its only result to English commerce in the Indian seas would have been annihilation, to the company bankruptcy, and to peaceful commercial sailors captivity and slavery.

The company did not at first feel the full force of the blows struck at commerce in those waters. Native merchants and native ships, coasters, first suffered, but at last the proudest ships of the company were damaged or captured.

The French were the means, it is well known, and generally recorded by historians, of causing the English to organize a large native army, and that nation was also the occasion of the organization of a well-equipped naval force in the company's service. In the year 1744 war broke out between England and France, and the latter became famous for her privateers. Two of that description, of half men-of-war, half pirate ships, sought enterprise in the Indian seas immediately that war was declared. One of them was the *Apollo*, fifty guns; the other, the *Anglesea*, of forty guns. The latter, from her name, had probably formerly been an English ship. After committing ravages in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope and of Madras, they cruised in the neighbourhood of Bombay.

To meet this small force, the government of Bombay could do nothing but send out grabs and fishing-boats, well armed, to look out for British ships, and warn them of their peril. This saved several very richly-laden ships, whose escape was narrow. A large Indiaman, the *Anson*, did not heed or could not understand the signals, and was attacked by the *Apollo*. The conflict was long and fierce. The English ship, neither constructed, armed, nor manned to resist such vessels as the *Apollo*, nevertheless fought until utterly disabled, and then her captor was found to be in so shattered a condition, that she was unable to continue her cruise; for every man hit on board the Indiaman, nine were struck on board the privateer. This conflict is the more remarkable, as it is the only recorded naval action between the English and French which ever took place off the coasts of Western India. The directors were so pleased with the heroism displayed by the crew of the *Anson*, that they voted them a gift of more than two thousand pounds sterling.

After these events, means were taken to augment the Bombay navy. "In the enlarged marine service were three ships, each of which carried twenty guns, a grab with twenty guns, from six to twelve pounders, five ketches carrying from eight to fourteen guns, from four to six pounders, eight gallivats, and one prahim. Two other ships were employed alternately as guard-ships at Gombroon. On each ship or grab were from fifty to seventy Europeans; on each ketch, from six to thirty; and two or three on each gallivat. To the list of officers were added two commanders, one first, six second, and three third lieutenants. At the same time the first attempts were made to improve the religious and moral character of both officers and men, orders being sent from the court of directors for the regular performance of divine service on board all the vessels, and a strict prohibition of all gambling, profane swearing, and indecent conversation. As, however, it was thought that these reforms would be incomplete until the Bombay marine should have an official uniform like a regular service, a petition was presented in 1761 by the officers to the governor in council, and they were ordered to wear blue frock-coats turned up with yellow, dress-coats and waist-coats of the same colour, and according to a regulated pattern. Large boot-sleeves and facings of gold lace were the fashion for the superior grades; whilst midshipmen and masters of gallivats were to rest contented with small round cuffs and no facings. With increased numbers, improved discipline, and fine clothes, the Bombay marine became a little navy, although it did not venture to assume that name. The English fleets, with their first-rate men-of-war and frigates, now floating in the harbour under the command of Admirals Watson, Cornish, Pococke, and Stevens, threw it into the shade, but at the same time taught it emulation and efficiency."

Such is a brief narrative of the early establishment of the Bombay navy. Its deeds, as shown in the course of this history, will be the proofs of its efficiency, as those events are related which gave opportunity to the maritime force of the company to distinguish itself.

The military establishment of Bombay had its origin when the company was put in possession of Bombay Island. The various events connected with the raising of troops, and their character, moral and military, have incidentally been related in foregoing chapters. The army at Bombay deteriorated gradually from the first fine body of royal troops who garrisoned it until towards the



close of the first half of the eighteenth century. The number of men was necessarily greater as the company's interests expanded, but the quality of the troops became worse, until the increasing consequence of the French, and their intriguing and aggressive policy, caused the president and council of Bombay to feel that the western presidency must have something that might be called an army. "In 1741 it consisted of but one regiment, consisting of a captain, nine lieutenants, fifteen ensigns, a surgeon, two sergeant-majors, eighty-two sergeants, eighty-two corporals, twenty-six drummers, three hundred and nineteen European privates, thirty-one mustees—by which term we conceive mastisas, or Indo-Europeans are meant—nine hundred topasses, twenty-seven servants, two subneces or native paymasters, a linguist, and an armourer—in all fourteen hundred and ninety-nine men. They were distributed into seven companies. Their monthly pay amounted to 10,314 rupees.\*

There was a native militia of sepoy's numbering seven hundred men, native officers included. The appearance of this body on parade must have presented the most extraordinary spectacle ever witnessed on occasion of reviewing troops. They were differently apparelled—some wearing a uniform like English soldiers, some in the habiliment of English tars; or rather, partly attired in the uniforms of three services. Rude native military uniforms decorated others. A few made themselves like South Sea islanders, by bedizening themselves in the most fantastic manner; very many wore scarcely any apparel at all—the usual piece of calico wound round their body serving for raiment and uniform. Their arms were as various as their costumes, muskets, matchlocks, swords, spears, bows and arrows, and many nondescript weapons provided by themselves under the idea of being peculiarly warlike and terrible. Except in war they were seldom mustered; most of them were attached as "peons," servants, bearers, runners, &c., to the civil servants; just as at this day, but under different regulations, the sepoy's are employed. They were very badly paid, and worse treated, kicked, smitten, flogged, at the caprice of the civil servants to whom they were attached. They endured degradation and misery with marvellous patience, and, on the whole, preferred the military to other employments, as was proved by the eagerness with which they re-enlisted, after having been "broke." The system of peons was adverse to the progress of the army; it was not until 1752 that these men were struck off the military roll, and

\* *Bombay Quarterly*, April 1857.

their expense charged to the civil department. In Bengal and Madras the sepoy's were better disciplined, and some were brought to Bombay; but they refused to serve except at higher pay than the custom was to give the natives of Bombay. The latter were offended at the invidious distinction, and murmured, so that the practice of employing Madras and Bengal sepoy's in the western presidency was given up. Ultimately the transfer of sepoy's from Bombay both to Bengal and Madras became usual. There existed a strong indisposition among the members of the company in London to pay for military, and the instructions to the president and council to reduce expenditure by a reduction of their military force was incessant. Thus a European regiment was removed from the fort at Sion, and its place supplied by topasses, by which a saving of 14,364 rupees was effected, but the safety of the place was endangered, and the president and council of Bombay filled with anxieties and cares, when their minds should have been free to attend to the company's business. The topasses were very uncertain soldiery; being of mixed Portuguese and Indian descent they had the prejudices of both races: they were generally of the religion of the Portuguese, with a large leaven of native idolatry. It was not without cause, therefore, that the president and council expressed their apprehensions when ordered to occupy so important a place with such rabble for soldiers:—"For Sion was a frontier post, and topasses were so little accustomed to strict discipline, that they might easily be surprised by a sudden invasion from the Mahratta country; and what was most strange of all, their homes, where their wives and children continued to reside, were in Salsette, then part of the Mahratta dominions. It was remembered that when the Portuguese were defending Tanna, they had been intimidated by the enemy seizing their families, and threatening to slaughter them unless the fortress capitulated; and was it to be doubted that the same plan would be resorted to in the case of the British? Then these soldiers in buckram would only enter the service on condition that they should be permitted to take their meals and attend mass on the other side of the strait; many actually, when on duty, left their posts for these purposes, and the dismissal of a hundred and seventy-two only caused a temporary abatement of the evil. A foolish economy and ignorance of the native character were the only reasons why this fatuous system was continued, even when the age of Indian conquest had commenced. On the one hand, the frugal court of directors would not increase the topasses' pay from four to five



rupees per mensem, which would have induced them to bring their families within the company's limits; on the other, they still retained the opinion that natives would not submit like topasses to be organized on the European system."\*

The officers of the company's service were both European and native, the latter frequently proved unfaithful, and were generally hostile in their hearts to all Europeans. The English officers were men of low birth, who had followed occupations the meanest, and were uneducated, with few exceptions. Officers have, in some few cases, sustained important local commands, who had attained to the rank of captains without being able to write! Existing documents in Bombay reveal the plans and shifts to which the civil authorities were frequently put to avoid the inconvenience attendant upon the illiterate character of their officers. The pay of the European officer was small, and he accordingly adopted various expedients for plundering the men under his command in their food and clothes, until mutiny at last taught the government that the robbery of the soldier was neither a humane, honourable, nor safe mode of paying the officers.

The retrenchments of the directors were not long in operation; the menaces and violence of the French and of the Mahrattas, as well as the known designs of other enemies, compelled an augmentation of force at Bombay and Tellicherry, and the factory at Surat was strengthened in such way as the position of the English there allowed. A change in the commanders attended upon increased garrisons. Officers of distinction in the royal army were sent out, and young gentlemen of birth and education were appointed as cadets. Sepoy regiments were gradually enrolled in imitation of the French; and royal regiments of infantry as well as regular companies of artillery were sent from England. Such changes were carried out with more earnestness when, in 1744, the war burst forth between the settlements of the two great European nations. In 1746, while the conflict was proceeding, the president and council raised at Surat a native force of two thousand men. It was deemed politic to collect these men from various septs and nationalities—Abyssinians, Arabs, Mussulmen of India, Hindoos, and, probably, a few Jews, topasses, and Parsees were among them. The creation of this force enabled the president, the next year, to send from Bombay considerable assistance to Fort St. David.

In the desire to obtain experienced officers soon after the foregoing events, the governor

\* *Bombay Diary*. *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

engaged one Goodyear, a major of artillery, who served on board the fleet of Admiral Boscawen. To this officer the command of the garrison at Bombay was consigned, and he took rank as a member of council, a circumstance which raised the status of the military. The salary of this high officer was but £250 a year, with allowance for servants, palanquin, and mess. A local company of artillery was then raised, and the old system of gunners and assistants was abolished. Ten companies of infantry, seventy men to each company, were next raised. The officers and non-commissioned officers raised the total number in the battalion to 841. Promotion went by seniority, except in especial cases; and then the governor was bound to inform the directors on what grounds he departed from the rule.

It was a curious circumstance that all Roman Catholics were excluded from service, even in the ranks of either the artillery or infantry; yet, nevertheless, the service was so popular with many of them that by degrees, in spite of every prohibition, they continued to enlist until, for a short time, a majority of the soldiers were of that persuasion. The physical and moral character of the troops was very bad; old men, invalids, criminals, and deserters, to a large extent, made up the muster roll. The hopelessness of finding sober and able-bodied Englishmen to enlist in their service led the company to seek recruits in that common recruiting ground of Europe—Switzerland. In 1752, Captain Alexander De Zeigle, and a Swiss company under his command, arrived in Bombay. This scheme failed. Dupleix, the French general, with the foresight for which he was characterized, predicted the result. The Swiss had hardly commenced their duties, when they found their soldierly pride wounded by insults and oppressions of various sorts, and their miserable pay afforded them insufficient subsistence. Discontent, neglect, insufficient food, and sickness wasted their numbers; and a large proportion of the remainder deserted to the French, where they were received as brothers and fellow-countrymen. As the places of the deceased, and those who deserted, were filled up with topasses, the Swiss company soon became only such in name.\*

In August, 1753, Major Sir James Foulis, Bart., took command of the troops. He introduced many reforms useful to both officers and

\* *Bombay Diary*, 17th of October, 1752; 3rd of April, August, and November, 1753; 7th of December, 1756; 20th of September, 1757; 20th of May, 1760. Speech of William Beckford, Esq., in the House of Commons, 19th of February, 1754. — *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.



men, but which were unpopular among both. Ultimately he conciliated the affections of all classes of his soldiers, and was then thwarted by the civil officials, until, at last, under a stinging sense of insult, he resigned his post and returned home. All efforts to establish the discipline of the company's troops on a solid basis failed until the mutiny act was made applicable to India by a bill which passed the British parliament in 1754. The act took effect on the 25th of April in the same year, and is one of the memorable incidents of British legislation for India. On the first of October following, this act was proclaimed at the fort gate of Bombay. The troops, who were drawn up on parade, were asked if they were willing to serve under the terms of this law, and they unanimously assented. The topasses probably did not understand its provisions, for they pleaded ignorance when arraigned for violation of the act for a considerable time afterwards, although every two months it was read at the head of every company. Many date the formation of the Bombay army from the day when the mutiny act was proclaimed at the fort of Bombay.

In order to carry out the design, so generally entertained among official persons, of perfecting military force, a secret and select committee for the management of military and diplomatic affairs was appointed at the beginning of the year 1755 by the court of directors, and ordered to correspond by ciphers of two kinds with committees similarly constituted in each of the three presidencies. The author of *The Rise of the Navy and Army at Bombay*, in the review published in that city, observes:—"To the skilful management of these boards must, under Divine Providence, be attributed the success of these grand operations by which Great Britain first obtained political power in India."

Towards the close of the year 1755 Major Chalmers arrived at Bombay in command of three companies of royal artillery, which enabled the local artillery company to improve itself upon their model. The year following, according to the *Bombay Diary*, the number of regular troops on the island was 1571. Of these 126 were in hospital; 986 were Europeans, comprising Germans, Dutch, Swedes, and a few Swiss, as well as English: the remainder were topasses. Besides this regular force, there was a brigade of 3,000 sepoy: these were distrusted both by the authorities and the regular force. At Surat and Cambay, where there were small sepoy garrisons in the factories, the factors expressed their doubts both of their fidelity and courage, and preferred arming Arabs, notwithstanding their

occasional bursts of fanaticism, and the fierceness and waywardness of their temper. Even after the battle of Plassey proved how sepoys might be disciplined and wielded, there was throughout Bombay a great reluctance to employ them. In 1759 a separate corps of 500 sepoys was disciplined on the English system. This was the first attempt in the Bombay presidency to use the sepoys as regular troops. The same year, when a French invasion was anticipated, it was estimated that on an emergency 15,750 men could be called out for service at Bombay; but not one half of them had ever smelt gunpowder, and not a quarter had learnt their drill. The number was made up thus:—Of the king's artillery were mustered 236 men; of the company's, 285; of the company's European infantry, 848—thus making 1,369 disciplined troops. There were also of sepoys that had been some time in garrison, 955; of sepoys that had lately been withdrawn from the Siddee's service, 754; of sepoys recently enlisted at Surat, 209; of Arabs, 316; of recruits raised in Scinde, 178—in all 2,412 irregulars. In the marine service there were 450 available men. Covenanted servants, captains of merchant vessels, free merchants, and other Europeans, who formed a separate corps, amounted to ninety-eight. The native population capable of bearing arms amounted to 3,017, and that of Mahim to 1,865, exclusive of clerks in offices, 648 labourers who were also a separate corps, and 150 private slaves—the whole amounting to 6,539 able-bodied persons. So silent are historians of British India regarding the rise of the European and native army, that their readers might almost suppose it to have been without any rudimental germ, never to have passed through the slow processes of growth, but to have sprung at once into vigorous existence. We read of no mortifications, no blunders, no failures to which men must ordinarily submit before their institutions attain to full strength. Such, however, there certainly were. Even when soldiers had been found, and the living material provided for the ranks abundantly, there was continual perplexity when attempting to make the proper arrangements for clothing, arming, paying, provisioning the troops, and other similar matters. At first clothing was issued to Europeans once a year; to topasses and others, once every two years. Long before the time for renewing it arrived, the men had supplied themselves with garments purchased by themselves; otherwise they must have marched in rags; and there appeared on parade a most curious variety of costume. The first reform in the dress of sepoys, who had up to that time retained the clothes in which they en-



listed, was to provide them with a jacket of red broadcloth and linen turban, to distinguish them from the enemy. Not until 1760 was it finally arranged that all the troops should be clad in uniforms corresponding to those already used in Madras and Bengal. Then the men made numerous complaints of the deductions from their pay to purchase these uniforms, and the regulations on the subject were frequently revised. It was difficult also to determine the periods of issuing pay; at first the Europeans were paid daily; then they were kept a month in arrears, it being supposed that all their cash would be required for debts contracted in the interval, and could not therefore be expended in drunken revels; and lastly, when they murmured loudly against this, the worst plan of all was adopted—that of issuing their pay monthly in advance. At the same time, as they were suffered to procure their own food so long as they dealt with the tradesmen whom the barrack-master patronised, and had no regular mess, their diet was usually bad and unwholesome.\*

Courts-martial were much abused by officers, although frequently the only means by which they could protect themselves from the oppressions and insults of the factors. It is a curious circumstance that the great Clive was mixed up with disputes connected with such transactions, when, as Colonel Clive, he served at Bombay in 1756. On that occasion the great man quarrelled with the president and council for appointing an officer junior to himself as president of a court-martial. Yet, although so prompt to assert his own rights and privileges, he was ready enough to trample upon the prerogatives and insult the dignity of inferior officers himself when they fell under his displeasure.

The hostility between the army and the civil authorities about 1760 is a fearful episode in the history of the Bombay presidency. "Defiance of authority seemed to have become the governing principle of the military. The new code of military law, the importation of regular troops from England, the organization of an army with European discipline and admirable appointments, had produced no better fruit than this. The spirit which animated the officers was active also in the ranks. Desertions were frequent, and Sir James Foulis estimated the annual loss from this

cause and death at ten per cent. So many men deserted from the factory in Scinde, that sufficient were not left for its defence in case of a sudden surprise, and it became necessary to release some prisoners for want of a guard. Punishments were of frightful severity, but apparently without any good effect. At Surat eight Europeans deserted during the military operations; all were retaken; one was shot, the others received a thousand lashes. Of seven topasses who deserted a little later under extenuating circumstances, five were sentenced to be shot, but as an act of mercy, permitted to escape each with eight hundred or a thousand lashes. Even the king's troops were contaminated, and at Tellicherry, when called into active service, loudly and insubordinately uttered the old complaint of want of beef, protesting against the fish rations provided for them on four days of the week."\* The Bombay army was frequently used on service in the other presidencies during its more perfect formation, and after discipline and military law became established.

In 1754 the few Swiss then left, three companies of sepoy, and Captain Forbes's company of Europeans from Bombay, and 150 topasses from Tellicherry, were sent to Madras. These were followed by fifty topasses from Ajengo, and a considerable number of Indo-Portuguese recruits. These troops, commanded by Captain Armstrong, served under Major Lawrence. The captain and his troops complained bitterly of the partiality and injustice of Clive, and his inequitable distribution of prize money. The conduct of the hero in return was marked by cruelty, malice, and persecution, with a contempt for law and military order, when either stood in the way of his own strong passion and indomitable will.

The Bombay army, whether serving in its own or in the sister presidencies, continued to have cause of complaint against the government. Perhaps, on the whole, they were better treated in Bombay than in either Bengal or Madras. During the whole history of the Bombay army the government was chargeable with culpable neglect of the comfort, health, and life of its soldiers. The whole British army in India was thus ungenerously disregarded, until after the English nation was awakened by the disclosures of the Crimean campaign to the danger and disgrace of such disregard of the happiness and efficiency of the noblest soldiers in the world. Yet, even then, the system of neglect was but slowly abolished. In October, 1858, public opinion in Bombay on these matters was thus

\* *Bombay Diary*, 14th of November, 1755; 10th of February, August, 1756; 5th and 12th of August, 1st of September, and 2nd of October, 1757; 4th of October and 13th of December, 1758; 7th of August and 3rd of October, 1759; 11th of March, 1760. *Surat Diary*, 1st of June and 10th of August, 1756; August 1757; 5th of April, 1759. *Diary of the Secret Committee*, 1755 and 1756. *Letter from Calcutta*, dated 5th and 7th of July, 1756.—*Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

\* *Bombay Quarterly*.



expressed in the *Bombay Standard*:—"The people of England are beginning at length to reflect that, if India is from henceforth mainly to be maintained by British troops, the foremost matter to be seen to is how best to preserve the health and economize the energies of the men. They are right in this; these are the very first things to be considered. We have hitherto proceeded either as if they were the last, or as if there was no particular occasion for bestowing any consideration on them at all. Until within the last ten years the Horse Guards acted as if their aim had been to destroy and demoralize the men as fast as possible, and the mutinies themselves have not had the lives to answer for that Whitehall red-tape has destroyed within the past twenty years. The men were provided with the heaviest and most inefficient weapons and worst possible clothing, to begin with; these we shall pass by, as the home authorities begin to see the error of their ways, and amend. A rigid attention to the regulations, as the regulations in these matters were wont to be attended to, would have lost us last year's campaign. By some extraordinary arrangement the men were, till 1850, in three-fourths of cases, dispatched so as to be sure of arriving during the rainy season, when their services could not be required and their health was certain to suffer. The allowance of intoxicating liquor during the voyage was such as to make one-half of them drunkards before they touched Indian ground at all. The Horse Guards never condescended to consult the India-house as to the date of dispatch, nor did the home military powers deem it requisite to state beforehand for what presidency troops were intended. A regiment turned up of a rainy morning at Bombay or Madras which the military authorities at these places respectively believed on its way to Calcutta, when the barracks were damp, moss-grown, or mildewed, and not the slightest preparation had been made for the reception of troops. The remedy for this last was brought about by a newspaper. On hearing the matter made constant subject of complaint, and being assured that no representations sent to the home authorities received the slightest attention, we, in 1842, caused our London correspondent to insert in his shipping list the number of men embarked, and the place of their destination. We are speaking under the most rigid review of facts; all these things were duly tabled at the time, with the full approval of authority. The men, as already stated, on arriving in the rains, were started for the Deccan as quickly as possible; but it is only within these ten years that the slightest shelter on the way was provided for them;

on they marched through floods of water, under deluges of rain, sleeping in swamps for six nights on end. The transfer from Bombay to Poonah commonly in these days cost one per cent. in the course of a fortnight, or at the rate of twenty-four per cent. on the year, had this rate of mortality been kept up. As we had taught the men to drink on the voyage out it was but natural the accomplishment should be kept up, so every morning, when the stomach in the East is most weak and languid, and tea and coffee are naturally wished to soothe it, we fired off the 'morning dram'—a dose of red-hot poison, to inflame the blood and bowels and create a thirst other drams could alone allay. Old officers told you that the abolition of this would create universal mutiny. In the first year of his reign the Marquis of Dalhousie said the abomination should cease, and it did cease; the most inveterate drunkard was ashamed to complain, all but confirmed drunkards held it a blessing to be kept aloof from temptation. All these things came to pass within ten years, to the saving of the lives of thousands; until within these twenty years none of them ever seem to have been thought of. So far have we done well, but we have barely made a beginning. The task before us when once commenced will be found quite as easy as those now seem that have been performed, and infinitely more important."

The military system of Madras progressed very slowly. There was a strong objection to enlist the natives, from a fear that the power thus raised might turn against those who created it:—"But here were special objections to the enlistment of Mahratta and other native sepoys. They belonged to races with which the English would ere long perhaps be at war; their language, manners, religion, were not only distinct from those of the English, but their superstitions regarding caste were so inflammable, that a single spark might set them in a blaze; they had not been used to the military system of Europe, and probably would not submit to its stringent discipline; and lastly came the most important consideration of all,—their wives and children lived under the shadow of native powers, and remained as hostages that their husbands and fathers should never resist the chiefs who had natural claims upon their allegiance. On these grounds, it might not only be fairly concluded that the sepoy would be an unsafe protector; he might also be a treacherous friend and dangerous spy. For what arguments could be urged against these cogent ones for rejecting his services? What inducements could be expected so to counteract the influence of established custom, religion, and family ties, as to make him a



loyal soldier? The offer of seven rupees a month, and the prospect of twenty, were the only inducements that could be thought of; and these had been already met by native states, who actually offered higher pay. No patriotism, no chivalrous sentiments, no lust of conquest were to kindle enthusiasm in sepoys, and secure their constancy. The only bond between them and their employers was to be the pittance of a soldier's pay."

Amongst the Europeans at Madras there was no military spirit. The factors were unwilling to carry arms, and the young men of England were reluctant to enter upon a military life in India, and especially in Madras, which was supposed to be wholly without attractions. The language of a recent Indian reviewer, in retrospect of this period, is strikingly applicable:—"The people of England were tranquil, prosperous, and selfish; indisposed both at home and abroad to attain celebrity by acts of enterprise or enthusiasm. This prosperity, torpidity, and lack of generous sentiment are especially to be observed in India. The age of discovery and adventure had passed away; the age of military exploits had not begun; so that the characters and actions of Anglo-Indians were for the most part flat and insignificant. Hawkins, Best, and Downton were almost forgotten; even the era of Aungier, Oxenden, and Child seemed as the days of the giants; and as compared with them, the governors of this time felt themselves but ordinary persons; whilst on the other hand, Clive was still giving and receiving black eyes at Merchant Taylors's school, or spending his indomitable energy in clambering up the church tower, and playing tricks upon the tradespeople of Market Drayton. In this middle age the highest ambition which the English of India could entertain was to accumulate money and retire. The larger number stopped far short of that, contenting themselves with a life of idleness, sensuality, or reckless dissipation, which was usually terminated by disease and an unhonoured death."

The military preparation at Madras, when, at the close of the half century, the French appeared off its coasts, was deemed considerable; a few hundred soldiers only were British, several thousand were topasses and sepoys.

The climate of Madras is, from its southerly situation, the hottest in India. The troops of that presidency, European and native, have always been severely tried by the burning sun in any field operations; yet, with the infatuation which has generally characterised the economical and sanitary departments of British military management, the troops have been clothed in a manner which has caused numerous deaths, from the time of the first

service of European soldiers in Fort St. George to the present day. That the reader's attention is not unnecessarily called to this subject, the various published reports and treatises of medical men, both civilians and military, abundantly prove. The following remarks on the clothing of our Indian army, from a London scientific periodical, cannot fail to be regarded as a valuable contribution to the intelligence which is requisite and ought to prevail on this matter:—"The flowing burnous of the swarthy Arabian and the loose-fitting snowy robes of the Indian tell us, clearly enough, what are the natural habiliments of the inhabitant of tropical regions; the European, indeed, left to himself in those climes, quickly rids himself of his dark woollen coverings, and gladly adopts the light cotton dress of the natives. The voice of nature, however, of reason, and of science, makes no impression on the stiff ear of the martinet colonel, or on the well imbued red-tapist soul of bureaucracy. We still are obliged to hear of dragoons charging the enemy under a sun throwing down its burning rays of 115 degrees, with their brows compressed by helmets, the metal of which would burn the hand laid upon it; our soldiers still march, or stagger along, with stocks and tight buttoned-up woollen jackets; and the best heat-absorbing colours are, in many cases, the dresses they wear. We wish now to say one word about the soldier's dress; and hope that a fact demonstrated both by experience and science may meet some willing ear among the authoritative few. Dr. Coulier has lately investigated, scientifically, the nature of the soldier's different habiliments as agents protecting him against heat and cold. His experiments show that a thin layer of white cotton placed over a cloth dress is sufficient to produce a fall of seven degrees per cent. in the heat of it. He gives the following table, which shows the effects of the sun's rays upon the temperature of tubes centigrade, covered with the following different articles of dress. Thermometer in the shade, 27°; exposed to sun, 36°. Tube not covered, 37·5; tube covered with cotton shirting, 35·1; with cotton lining, 35·5; with unbleached linen, 39·6; with dark-blue cloth, 42°; with red cloth, 42°; with dark-red capote cloth, 42·5; with red cloth for the 'sous-officers,' 41·4; with dark-blue cloth for ditto, 43°. Here, then, is the fact scientifically demonstrated, that a diminution of temperature, such as might suffice to prevent a soldier from being struck down by the heat of a tropical sun, may be obtained simply by placing a white cotton covering over his dark woollen dress. These are Dr. Coulier's general conclusions:—1. The colour of soldiers' clothes has very little sensible influence over



the diminution of caloric.—2. All kinds of textures are capable of absorbing a certain quantity of hygrometric water in a latent state. The quantity is considerable in the case of wool, but linen absorbs less, and cotton least of all.—3. This absorption takes place without any immediate loss of its caloric by the body.—4. The colour of clothes has a great influence upon the absorption by them of solar rays; and whatever the nature of the clothes, the greatest advantages are obtained by covering them with white-coloured materials, when the wearer is exposed to the burning sun.”\*

In Bengal the progress of raising a native army was similar to that at Bombay and Madras; but the natives were there sworn—organized as regular soldiers, as has been already stated in this chapter. It does not appear, however, that this took place quite so early as many suppose; for in 1707, when Calcutta was exalted to the dignity of a presidency, the garrison was augmented to 300 men, who were chiefly sepoy. During the Mahratta incursions of 1739, and following years, some progress was made in disciplining native companies. In 1743 the directors wrote to the president and council at Calcutta, acknowledging their services in organizing Lascars and militia, and providing material of war; but no mention is made of sepoy, yet at that time great progress had been made in preparing sepoy for service. The directors, in all probability, not paying particular attention to that feature of their servants' efforts, class the sepoy under the words Lascars and militia:—“We entirely approve of the necessary precautions taken on the Mahrattas' invasion to prevent a surprise, by hiring a number of Lascars, forming the inhabitants into a militia, surveying the town, fortifications, guns, purchasing some small arms, and the like; the expense upon such an urgent occasion we cheerfully acquiesce in, relying upon your care and frugality in disbursing our money on every article.” The directors, in the same letter, encourage the council to proceed with their excellent military organization, so as to be prepared for further dangers from the same quarter. “As the province is liable to the Mahrattas' incursions, we would have such additions made to our fortifications as you upon the spot shall deem requisite for the security of the settlements, putting us to no further expense herein than is necessary.”

Acting on this general, but cautious direction, the council proceeded with its military measures, which were more in reference to the perfection of the resources they had than to any increase of them; and among the other useful acts to which they resorted was the

more complete discipline of their sepoy, so that regular troops, well organized on the European system, chiefly natives of the upper provinces of Bengal, but some few Assamese, Burmese, Peguins, men from the coast of Coromandel, and even recruits from Malabar, were numbered among them.

When Clive became acquainted with military affairs, he, both at Madras and Bengal, called forth the energies of the sepoy: indeed, whatever was done before his time was only a preliminary to what he accomplished. He caught up the French idea of drilling the Spahis (sepoy), and ranking them with European soldiers in the field.

The histories of the Madras and Bengal armies, up to the breaking out of the great eastern war with France, are brief, while that of Bombay, the oldest presidency, covers a large space of time. The progress of the Madras and Bengal armies up to this point was uniform as short; that of Bombay was chequered and eventful, and, if minutely pursued, involving numerous incidents interesting to military men of all nations, but especially to English officers, and still more especially to those who have served the East India Company. From the period of the great oriental struggle with France, the histories of the three armies so blend with the general development of English conquest and glory that the story is one: no separate treatment is required to mark successive stages of advance.

Having followed the progress of the English in continental India up to the period of the French war, and the improvement of the navy and army of the company to a date several years later; having directed attention to the action on India and Indian affairs in the eighteenth century of the different European nations whose relation to the East has been traced in previous chapters; frequent reference having been made to the companies organized in Ostend, Denmark, and France, in rivalry of those of the other European countries earlier in the field of oriental commerce; having given also brief notices of the minor associations formed in Prussia, Trieste, and Spain;—there will be no necessity for digressions in the future story of English power in the East, in affairs connected with those nations, excepting the French. The position of England immediately after the period already treated could hardly be understood, and the development of her success could with difficulty be appreciated, unless her relative standing, as compared with all her competitors, was seen, and especially with the greatest of them—France. To the preliminary quarrels with that nation the reader's attention will now be directed.

\* *Medical Times.*



## CHAPTER LXVII.

## JEALOUSIES AND QUARRELS WITH THE FRENCH PREVIOUS TO THE FIRST BREAKING OUT OF WAR BETWEEN THEM AND THE BRITISH IN INDIA.

"COMING events cast their shadows before," is a saying as true and philosophical as it is trite: it contains a beauty and significance in its mode of thought and expression which are strikingly reflected in the actual facts of history. During the early part of the eighteenth century, especially from the year 1730 to the breaking forth of war, the relations and feelings of the French and English in the Indian peninsula plainly portended the coming struggle. Such events as were approaching were too mighty and momentous not to cast the shadow of their coming. The minds of both French and English were in a state of preparedness for war; events partly produced this condition, and partly brought it forth to view as far as it existed independent of them. Historians have neglected the signs of the times in India previous to the war, as indicative of the relations of England and France there at the moment when the trumpet of battle was sounded, and as foreshadowing their probable relations when the spoils of the field should be gathered. The writers of Indian history are generally too hasty in hurrying from one great prominent event to another, to perceive, or at all events to describe, how these arise from minor incidents, or from facts and principles of which these minor incidents are tokens. Looking carefully at the attitude of England and France on the peninsula for a number of years before war was declared, it was obvious that between two such nations a struggle for mastery must arise. In laying the foundation, as well as in raising the superstructure of their plans and policy, each nation acted in a manner characteristic: the French were impressive, brilliant, and dashing; the pomp of arms and the parade of military power were, in their measure, as conspicuous at Pondicherry and Myhie as in Paris. The English plodded along perseveringly, holding by what they acquired tenaciously, wasting no words or polite expressions to their flattering competitors; rude, obstinate, enduring, arduous, fierce in encounter, the Britons held on their course in peace and war, if their condition at the factories might with accuracy be described as either, at a time when over their serenest day clouds and tempests gathered, and when in the most quarrelsome episodes they were sure to find some unlooked for ally, or some peace-compelling fortune. For more than a

century the power of the English had grown slowly but surely; as the tree which has been long rearing its trunk strikes deeper its roots, so it had been with them. The French career had been short and brilliant; it was like a graceful shrub, with much display of foliage and blossom, but however vigorous as to its kind, unable to resist the buffeting of storms which might beat upon the sturdy oak in vain.

Pondicherry, although it did not assume a position of great power before 1741, when Dupleix made it the centre of his operations, yet several years earlier, under Dumas, it was of consequence, and exercised control over the factories or *comptoirs* of Chandernagore in Bengal, Karical on the coast of Coromandel, and Myhie on the coast of Malabar. On the western coast of India the French were better traders than on the Coromandel shore, except at Surat, where they were more missionary than mercantile, and were intensely solicitous to make converts of the English.

In 1722 their first settlement appears to have been made in Malabar. Boyanores (referred to in a previous chapter) invited them to settle there, as his alarm at the growing power of the English became intolerable to himself. The position selected by the newcomers was supposed to show judgment and taste, but they displayed more skill in the selection as soldiers than as merchants. The place chosen was an eminence with a commanding view and convenient site. A river discharged itself into the sea near the spot, but it was navigable a considerable distance up its course. Without being landlocked, the harbour was sheltered from all prevailing winds. A factory was built on the hill, and thus the settlement of Myhie was established. This spot is worthy of note, as in the conduct of its factors and garrison there were more indications of an intention to undermine and thwart the English than in any other of the French settlements. The future conflict was, as it were, anticipated between Myhie and the English settlement of Tellicherry, but four miles distant.

According to Anquetil de Perron, it was in 1725 that the French settlers at Myhie first quarrelled with the natives. The Boyanores suddenly made an incursion, cut down the French flag-staff, and drove the factors away, who retired to Calicut. As the Boy-



anores, although so jealous of the English, were thus for a short time more friendly with them than previously, their hostility was attributed to the English, whom the French believed to be jealous of their rising influence. They considered their own influence to be as the golden star of day, and that of the English as the silver star of night, whose light should soon be quenched in that of the more glorious orb. This or very similar phraseology was employed by them in their various communications with the French directors. They alleged that one of the two powers must gain empire in India, that the glory was reserved for France, that England believed as much, and was sick with envy at their rising fortunes. It was not, however, deemed sound policy at Pondicherry to attribute openly to the English at Tellicherry or Bombay the aggressive proceedings of Boyanores, but preparations were promptly made to chastise the latter, and to teach the former that "France was too strong for savages, native or English." Five merchant vessels were laden with troops and stores, and the whole placed under M. Pardaillan Gondrin. Under his command, and next in authority, was Bertrand François Mahé de Labourdonnais. He had just arrived in Pondicherry with the rank of second captain, when the expedition was about to sail. As he had obtained great reputation for his knowledge of naval engineering, then little understood, and of naval gunnery, rather better known, and as the fame of his pamphlets on naval affairs published in Europe had reached Pondicherry, he was at once placed in high official relation to M. Gondrin. The descent at Myhie was a masterpiece of skill. The enemy, in great force, prepared to resist, but Labourdonnais invented a species of raft, on which he protected his troops by bales of cotton, and disembarked in the face of the enemy nearly in order of battle without losing a man. The subsequent conflicts, however, cost loss of life, and demanded much spirit and courage. Labourdonnais was the real commander of the expedition, and won the glory of its success, the details of which are not of sufficient importance for our story. On shore as well as at sea, Labourdonnais was the genius of order and authority; he occupied the place, secured the position, and made it strong in the face of native foes and English rivals. Historians and biographers notice, as a singular coincidence, the name of the officer and of the place so easily captured by his inventive genius—*Mahe*; but this name seems to have been subsequently given to the place by the French, and not until they had ultimately evacuated it, and then rather by those

who wrote about it than by those who acted in it. In the documents of the English factory at Tellicherry, and in other contemporary records, it is always called *Myhie*, so that the coincidence upon which so many French writers and some English love to dwell had no existence.\*

The fame of this expedition and of Labourdonnais sped all over India, and created unpleasant feelings in the English communities, and especially in Tellicherry, the nearest to the scene of the exploit. The English there felt extreme apprehension that a conflict for ascendancy must soon begin, and they, with their characteristic bluntness, took no pains to conceal what they felt. The French, on the other hand, knowing that the English were rather deeply rooted in India, and that Tellicherry must for some time be stronger than *Myhie*, and Bombay more powerful than Pondicherry, acted warily, and assumed the utmost cordiality and courtesy; which, when it appeared safe to set aside, was lightly thrown off, and a tone of haughty defiance and insolent contempt adopted in its stead. The French commander, on his arrival, opened a correspondence the most bland and insinuating with the chief of the English factory, who responded in a brusque and business-like tone and form, which contrasts strangely with the studied language of the French commander. This correspondence was singularly characteristic, and throws more light on the men, and their modes at that juncture, than could be brought to bear upon them by a far more extended narrative. This correspondence never appeared in print, except some quarter of a century ago in an Indian periodical; it is, therefore, interesting for its novelty, as it is on account of its "innuendoes, diplomatic evasions, and other curious characteristics." Mr. Adams, the chief, eight years before made the chaplain a present of plate, on which was an inscription in classical Latin; "but if he ever had any scholarship, his letters would show that it had been long ago rubbed off in the warehouse of Tellicherry." The French commander thus opens the communications:—

*On board ship La Vierge de Grâce,  
November 29th, N. S., 1725.*

MONSIEUR,—I am charmed that the affairs which have conducted me to this coast have given me this day the pleasure of your acquaintance. It will not be my fault if there is not a perfect union reciprocally between us.

The subject of my voyage to this place, has no other view than to revenge the insults and perfidiousness that the French nation have received from the Prince of Bur-

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\* Mr. Mill commits this error uniformly, calling the place *Mahe*, and as most modern writers follow Mill slavishly, this name has obtained currency in England.



gorah, and I shall go directly about making him repent it, if he wont submit to reason. I hope, through the perfect union that is between the two nations, if I should want any succour, to find it from you, whom I address preferably to any other. In return I offer everything that depends upon me, and am perfectly, Monsieur,

Your very humble and very obedient servant,  
PARDAILLAN GONDRIIN.

P. S.—I am desired by Monsieur Perier to assure Mrs. Adams of his respect, and I have the honour to assure her of mine.

To this polite letter the English chief replied in terms coarse but candid and pertinent:—

*Tellicherry, November 20th, 1725.*

MONSIEUR,—It was with the greatest satisfaction imaginable I received the honour of yours by Monsieur Louet, and shall on all occasions take the opportunity of cultivating and strengthening our new acquaintance, promising on my part, it shall not be my fault if there is not a perfect union between us, congratulating your safe arrival on this coast.

Am obliged to you for the notice you give me of the occasion of the voyage you have undertaken; the Malabars have always been perfidious, which the English have very often experienced, and was designed for these three years last past to have made Boyanore sensible of their resentment. The reason why they did not unknown to you. However, may depend shall observe a strict neutrality, and serve you what we can, consonant to the perfect union between the two nations in Europe. But cannot but complain of the usage we have received from Monsieur La Tuet of the *Triton*, to whom have sent twice, to admit our boats to go into the Myhic river, and fetch out the hon'ble company's goods lying there, but he would not permit it. As heard of your coming was not pressing with him, but hope to receive better usage from you, in which request your positive answer, that may accordingly take measure to get those goods, and advise my superiors. Your concurrence in this will demonstrate your resolution to keep to the good union and harmony between the two crowns, and lay me under the obligation of serving you with all readiness.

My wife and self are highly obliged to you and Monsieur Perier for kind remembrance, and in return tender our services, and am, Monsieur,

Your very humble, &c.,  
ROBERT ADAMS.

The French landed, conquered, but lost forty men, and on the evening of the same day their chief wrote to Mr. Adams:—

*From the Camp at Myhie,  
December the 2nd, N. S., 1725.*

MONSIEUR,—The gracious letter which you had the goodness to write me obliges me to give you an account of the descent I made to-day, and forced the intrenchment, which appears to me different from what the Indians are accustomed to make.

Where I took two pieces of cannon. I believe this will give you pleasure from the regard you have to what relates to me. I shall not fail acquainting you of what happens for the future in this expedition, having the honour to be perfectly, Monsieur, &c. &c.,

PARDAILLAN GONDRIIN.

P. S.—Suffer me, if you please, to place in this my respects to Mrs. Adams.

One came and assured me, sir, that they saw very nigh this morning, in the time of action, ten Englishmen. I would not believe it to be true, but I am obliged to tell you, sir, that all Europeans whom I find with arms in their hand I shall hang.

The skill displayed in blending politeness with insinuations against the English is admirable. The trenches were not such as the Indians were accustomed to make, and as there were no other Europeans in the neighbourhood but the English of Tellicherry, the implication was plain. Ten Englishmen were seen "very nigh" in the time of action. The polite commander, of course, could not believe the like, but, at the same time, out of pure love and courtesy was obliged to inform his English friend that all Europeans found in arms he would hang; as if Europeans had not a right to take service with a native prince. The plain-spoken Englishman denied the impeachment, and urged the redress of grievances:—

*Tellicherry, November 21st, 1725.*

SIR,—This night was honoured with your favours of this date, and am obliged to you for an account of your success against Boyanore, in which wish you joy.

Am sorry any one should inform you that any English were under arms against you this day. That would be acting the same that have so often complained of; therefore you will harbour no such thought.

In my last, wrote you about some merchandise that lies in Myhie river, belonging to my hon'ble masters, to which you have not been pleased to reply. Beg the favour futurely you will please to write your mind on that and other public affairs to John Braddyll, Esquire, who is here a commissary for the hon'ble English company on this coast.

My wife and self are obliged to you, and in return she gives her respect, and I am, sir, &c. &c.,

ROBERT ADAMS.

The directness of the Englishman brought the diplomatic quibbling and nonsense of the French commander to bay. He at once dropped his politeness, addressed the council instead of his friend "the English chief," and intimated his scorn of mercantile matters:—

*To the Council for affairs of the English  
nation at Tellicherry.*

*From the Fort at Myhie,  
December 4th, N. S., 1725.*

GENTLEMEN,—I received the letter you had the goodness to write me. You tell me of boats of merchandise which you have in the river. Give me leave to tell you that 'tis talking Greek, for I neither understand, nor will I embarrass myself in affairs of commerce; for I meddle in nothing but matters of war. You may, for the future, in such like cases, apply to Messieurs Mollandin and Tremisot.

I have the honour, &c. &c.,  
PARDAILLAN GONDRIIN.

The English, still true to their matter-of-fact character, apply to the gentlemen to whom the bombastic commander referred them, who reply that they are too much engaged in war to be tormented with such small affairs of trade; that they could not decide the point even if they had time, and it was worth their while; and finally recommend their interrogators to apply to the council of



Pondicherry. Notwithstanding the strangeness of making a reference to the supreme council for French affairs in India concerning a matter which was too mean for the French commander, or his mercantile colleagues in direction of French affairs at Myhie, the English, still commonplace, in their own common-sense way, proceeded to appeal to the council for their property and redress of injuries. The tone of these French communications was as devoid of true courtesy as of justice and honour. Further correspondence between the two factories of Myhie and Tellicherry ensued, but no person at either factory understood the language spoken at the other sufficiently well to carry on a clear correspondence, and delays and mistakes resulted, until it was mutually agreed to transact business in Portuguese, as men of that nation, or natives — half-caste Portuguese — resided at both places.

The native chiefs were not slow in learning the true state of feeling between the English and French, and did their best to inflame their jealousies and enmities, fearing that both might unite for purposes of territorial aggrandizement. The Boyanore pretended to ally himself with the English; a "Nair," named Curringboda, ostensibly attached himself to the French, and both European powers were placed by their cunning native allies in an attitude of anger and defiance. No English were allowed to cross the French borders, nor were the latter permitted to pass into British territory; if such a circumstance by chance occurred, the intruders were chased like spies or poachers. The vessels of either nation were forbidden to enter the harbour of the other. A French "muncha" persisted in approaching the harbour of Tellicherry, and when warned off, the crew used insulting language. The offended council at Tellicherry demanded from that at Myhie an apology for the trespass and rudeness of their mariners, and also demanded explanations as to the object of the muncha's voyage, which the English alleged was to land ammunition and military stores for the supply of the Rajah of Cotiote, in order that he might have means of making war upon the Boyanore, so as to prostrate or enfeeble the ally of the English. The object of the French was to make war upon the British indirectly, and without incurring the responsibility of appearing in arms. The French commander apologised in most complaisant terms, which might have been intended for irony, for the rudeness of his sailors, but took no notice of the serious impeachment of stirring up feuds to the damage of the English, and supplying their known enemies with munitions of war. Thus, step

by step, the French were accumulating an amount of injuries to the English, which no attempt was made to explain away, soften, or compensate; and the irritated British were nursing their pent-up rage for the hour of decisive action. The diary of the Tellicherry factory from November 7 to December, 1725, is a journal of grievances against the French.

In 1726 the French and English were very nearly coming into conflict. The Boyanore was attacked by the French. The latter pretended various grievances, but the real motive was to weaken the relative power of the English by the conquest of their most ostensible ally, and to produce a moral effect among the native powers, by showing that the English were not able to protect their friends against France, and that to incur the ill-will of the latter was destructive to all native powers, whatever their European alliances. This was a bold motive, and the measure was well calculated to carry it out. The Boyanore claimed assistance, for which he offered to pay, a condition upon which the English insisted. They sent him one hundred nairs, but the Boyanore had neither money nor probity, and as he had already contracted a large debt for military supplies, they were unwilling to allow him to increase it. The results were that the Boyanore demanded a truce with the French, and came to terms. The French accomplished their object, the prestige of the English was lowered, and their characteristic habit of adopting a costly economy was once more brought prominently out.

The French were emboldened, and joined the natives that were hostile to the English in every demonstration of ill-feeling. It was at this juncture that the French united in a pretended hunting expedition with certain native chiefs, a circumstance incidentally referred to in a former chapter to show the relation of the English to the native powers around them. The conduct of the French on that occasion was palpably hostile, and the English demanded satisfaction. The reply was somewhat submissive, as if its authors were conscious that they had gone too far, and that they might incur the displeasure of the authorities of Pondicherry; or else they were alarmed at the practical manner in which the English had shown their disapproval of "the hunting party" of native chiefs and French soldiers, by volleys of grape-shot and musket balls. At all events, the tone of the French was apologetic; they declared they merely went a hunting, and were surprised to find the English so unneighbourly, and hoped, for the future, to "live in peace and harmony with all," especially their



European neighbours, and chiefly their British friends. Soon after, the French fired upon an English hunting party—a *bonâ fide* party of pleasure—and demands for redress were of course made. The French pleaded unqualified innocence. The answer of the chief of the English factory is one of the most remarkable specimens of English diplomacy ever disclosed. The plain-speaking Briton was not to be soothed by artless words, but in direct terms informed his French correspondents what he thought of them. It is so unique, that the reader cannot fail to peruse it with interest. It is signed by all the members of the council, but the style identifies it as the production of the chief, Robert Adams. The "Cuny Nair" referred to is the native leader, previously termed "Curringboda," the English having been accustomed to term him "Cuny," or "Cuny Nair," in writing or speaking of him:—

*To M. Tremisot and his Council.*

*Tellicherry, October, 21st, 1736. O.S.*

GENTLEMEN,—We just now received yours of this date, by which you acknowledge the receipt of ours of the 16th instant. By this we find, as we have always done, commit what you will, are never at a loss for an evasion, which treatment is grown so old, that it will hardly pass for current at this time of day. It is with satisfaction find you confess to have had some of your people out those days we hunted, which we designed for our recreation, till obstructed by you and your accomplice, Cuny Nair, who of himself would never have dared to have broken the peace with us without your inciting and assisting him, as he did in conjunction with your people, by firing on us first, which was a good reason for us the next day to go with more caution and preparation in our own limits and conquest. It is very unaccountable you of the French nation should not only with your money and ammunition encourage the country against us, but appear personally yourselves in an hostile manner, and till you can deprive us of the evidence of our senses, we shall not fail to continue to charge the French with the breach of the good harmony between the two crowns in Europe, as expressed in our officers' and soldiers' narrative sent you of the actions of the 12th and 13th instant.

We did in ours of the 16th, reply to all you wrote, and did then signify that Cuny Nair to the 12th instant was esteemed by us a friend, and might have continued so, had you not beguiled him with vain promises of protection and charges to disturb us. If this is your meaning of loving tranquillity, we are strangers to it, and shall be proud of being accounted so. As to the contents of what you wrote, we are, and always have been, observers of the peace and good harmony between the two crowns, and find with concern our patiently bearing all your insults, both by sea and land, has not only given you the opportunity to proceed as you have in this hostile manner, but has encouraged you to do what you have lately done with Cuny Nair; but your design not taking effect, are resolved to deny it. Otherwise, might have been as open as Monsieur Boisson of the *Lyllie* was, when he not only seized and detained, but plundered the *Deury* grab of Mangalore.

These your treatments are so plain and obvious, that we need not enlarge on them, and that now you should begin, as did on the 12th and 13th instant, to give us new testimonies of your continuing to disturb us, does not at all

answer your expressions of this date, not to give us any disturbance by land or sea. We should think ourselves very happy, did your actions answer your writing; then we could be able to say, as we have always made it our study and endeavours to be in good harmony with you; but while you agitate, assist, and excite the country people in friendship with us, not only to take up arms, but appear with them against us in an hostile manner as above, you must pardon us if, in making the just and true representation, we occasion you any uneasiness or confusion, for we cannot but say, your usage, for these three years last past, has been without regard to laws of nations or nature; and as to Cuny Nair, who has broke his faith with us, whenever we think convenient to call him to an account for it, shall not, we hope, find any of your people with him; which will induce us to be, gentlemen,

Your most humble and most obedient servants,

ROBERT ADAMS.

JOHN JOHNSON.

STEPHEN LAW.

WM. FORBES.

HUGH HOWARD.

Probably, under the circumstances in which it was penned, no communication could have been more pointed and prudent. The French had all the advantage of style and dexterity; the English, whatever their disadvantages in those particulars, were so "downright straightforward" as to cause confusion to their intriguing rivals, and leave them little power to reply to any purpose.

Soon after the suave expressions of the French in this correspondence, the English received certain intelligence of the hostility of Cuny Nair. It will be recollected by the reader, from the perusal of previous chapters, that there were several hills in the immediate vicinage of Tellicherry. These, if occupied strongly by the British, would enable them to command the plains and the land approaches: if occupied by an enemy, Tellicherry would be untenable, and on this account the situation was deemed ineligible by military men, as requiring a larger garrison than the amount of its commerce could afford. Myhie, on the other hand, could not be commanded, while its own position was elevated and strong. One of the hills near Tellicherry, the occupation of which by an enemy might prove perilous, was called Putinha, and this Cuny Nair intended to seize. The English reasonably believed that this movement was impelled by French instigation, which the subsequent conduct of the authorities at Myhie proved. The English anticipated Cuny, and occupied the hill themselves. There was another hill under the guns of the English fort, called Caria Cuna, and as soon as the French perceived the movement of the British towards Putinha, they seized the other eminence. Another correspondence ensued, which issued in a conference. One Louet visited Tellicherry, and debated affairs with the British, but this



conference did not prove satisfactory. Stephen Law and William Forbes proceeded as an English deputation to Myhie. The hospitalities shown in each case to the delegates softened the asperity of the contest, and the affair ended in "a drawn battle," both parties abandoning the military positions assumed, and Cuny keeping himself out of the way. On the whole, the dispute ended favourably to the British, for, practically, they succeeded in their object, although their demands for apology were not satisfied.

The military expenses of both British and French factories now so alarmed the directors of each company, that orders were sent out to cultivate a good understanding. The French only intended to cultivate it so long as necessity constrained, and hoped to recruit the sinews of war for a better opportunity. The English were in earnest, and orders were issued to the council of Tellicherry to reduce their armed forces, and to cultivate a kind intercourse with their Gallic neighbours. As the distance between the two settlements was so short, it was easy to reciprocate courtesies and hospitalities, which were for a while abundant, and apparently cordial, but the French continued to intrigue with the native princes against the English, and to the disturbance of the country, as far as their clever but mischievous influence reached.

In 1728 a treaty of peace and alliance was signed by the governors of Bombay and Pondicherry, and the directors of the East India Company in London and the president and council in Bombay believed that differences were healed; but the Tellicherry people knew better, and while carrying out the directions of their superiors with frankness, did not relax their vigilance, nor increase their confidence in the political honesty of their new allies.

The English, who had been long enduring, became at length testy, and rather disposed to end harassing disputes, suspicions, and disquietude by arms. They ceased to be anxious for peace with French or natives, although they did not then see on what a grand scale of action the warlike powers of themselves and their countrymen in India should be soon tested. As the year 1740 approached, the tone of feeling in Bombay and Madras, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, at Surat and on the Hoogly, was that of a sullen conviction that, some time or other, French gasconade and aggression would provoke war. The English did not desire it, but, as the French say, they "accepted the situation,"—they gradually conformed their minds to the conviction that it was best to fight it out, unless some decisive measure of peace in Europe should harmonise elements which so

actively repelled one another. This state of mind probably prevailed more at Tellicherry than anywhere else in India, from the juxtaposition of the settlement and garrison of Myhie. The pugnacious feeling created in the minds of the English by the conduct of the French found vent sometimes in a wrong direction, and made them too hasty in entering into native quarrels, which, in a calmer frame, they would have avoided. The combativeness thus called forth again reacted upon their tone and bearing towards the French. Events beyond their control, and the working of which was hidden, were preparing them for the development of the warlike genius, activity, and daring which so soon made them masters of an empire. Probably the disturbances and disorder within the factory at Myhie, in 1739, prevented the occurrence then of the collision to which circumstances were fast ripening. The consciousness that the English were the stronger also averted overt acts on the part of the French, who were still further held in check by the derangements of their commercial and economical affairs.

In 1740 tidings arrived in India that England had declared war against Spain, and that it was believed in Europe France would, as usual, espouse the cause of the enemies of England. Previous to the arrival of this news, a war of correspondence was waged; but the advent of such information created an excitement which could with difficulty be repressed. The French, as usual when any difference ensued, and they supposed themselves strong enough, made hostile demonstrations. The British at Tellicherry had fortified one of the neighbouring hills, called Andolamala; the French formed intrenchments near it. The English, regarding this as an aggression, did not, as formerly, write blunt letters, or hold conferences, but directed a small party of soldiers, under the command of an ensign, to assault the trenches. This was admirably executed. The attacking party was small, and but one European officer with it. The French opened a heavy fire upon the advancing party when within range; but so rapidly, boldly, and orderly did the British charge, that they entered the trenches with little loss, and drove out the enemy with so much ease as to excite the contempt of the natives and deeply to humiliate the vaunting soldiers by whom the trenches were so insolently opened and occupied. The humiliation of the Gauls did not end with their defeat; they did not dare to strike another blow; but instead of gallantly seeking to retrieve their disgrace, they endeavoured to bribe the native chiefs to make war in their stead. The result of the action to the English was a great in-



crease of their moral influence and self reliance. The event did not certainly dispose them to put up with further insults, which the French continued to offer in such way as to leave a declaration of hostilities on the part of the English on such ground impossible, while the affronts, nevertheless, irritated and annoyed.

Tellicherry was the focus, or, at all events, the principal focus, when there were several foci, of quarrel with the French. The factory at Ajengo, the progress and general troubles of which were related in a former chapter, was one of the points around which French influence and menace gathered; but as the Dutch preferred learned despatches to war, so the French preferred gasconade and display to any immediate appeal to arms, although they made it evident enough they were willing to strike but dared not. The English factors at Ajengo were as invulnerable to French satire as to Dutch casuistry: they pursued the even tenor of their way, and carried on their correspondence with the French with much less respect for their adversaries than when addressing the Dutch, notwithstanding the overlaid courtesy and compliment of the letters and despatches of the former.

At Carwar and Honawar, on the Malabar coast, the English were annoyed by the presence of French agents in the neighbourhood, fomenting disputes between the native chiefs, stimulating them against the English, and sowing seeds of envy and anger among the neighbouring Dutch and Portuguese, which were as prolific as those who scattered them could desire. Still it was at Tellicherry not only so far as Western India was concerned, but taking all India into account, that intrigues and open acts of hostility on the part of the French had the best opportunity of development; and when all was comparatively calm in the British settlements of Malabar, disturbances between British and French broke out again at Tellicherry and Myhie. The French troubles appeared to have been hushed to slumber at the other stations—even St. David's was comparatively little tormented by Pondicherry—when at Tellicherry there occurred new alarms and discontents.

In 1741 the expectations of a general war in Europe were yet more prevalent in India than they were, as above noticed, in the beginning of 1740. France and England, although virtually at war from 1740, were not actually in hostilities until 1744; accordingly, authors date the commencement of this war very variously, some considering that it properly commenced in 1742, others before that time, and another class of writers dating its commencement from 1744.

It was natural that the Europeans in India should in their own political relations be keenly susceptible of any impression from symptoms which portended a struggle between the two great maritime powers of Europe, when it is remembered how frequently their swords were drawn against one another. The relations of the two great contiguous European countries as to peace and war over a long period of history may be thus stated. There broke out wars between England and France at the following dates, and which lasted for the following periods:—"1100 for two years; 1141, one year; 1161, twenty-five years; 1211, fifteen years; 1224, nineteen years; 1294, five years; 1339, twenty-one years; 1368, fifty-two years; 1442, forty-nine years; 1492, one month; 1512, two years; 1521, six years; 1549, one year; 1557, two years; 1562, two years; 1627, two years; 1666, one year; 1689, ten years; 1702, eleven years; 1744, four years; 1756, seven years; 1776, seven years; 1793, nine years; and lastly, in 1803, twelve years: making in all 265 years of war within a period of 727 years."

The ideas of French power which prevailed amongst Englishmen, and amongst the men of other European nations in 1741, were very different from those which now prevail:—"During the early period of these wars, our continental rival continued preponderant, and the revenue and population considerably exceeded those of this country. The revenue of Louis XIV. was computed at nearly three times that of Charles II. The alliance against France, cemented by the perseverance of William, rendered victorious by the talents of Marlborough, relieved us from the dreaded overthrow of the political equilibrium; but even after our splendid successes, it continued a common opinion among foreigners, as among ourselves, that the resources of the French were more solid, and that they would soon equal or surpass us in those arts which form the constituents of national wealth.

"In the reign of George I., this country bore to France in point of population the proportion of only forty-five to one hundred. Were we to continue the parallel, we should find that as to population we shall probably overtake our ancient rival before the lapse of many years. Meantime, those who know that the issue of a military struggle mainly depends not so much on population as on disposable revenue, will be satisfied that at present we should have no cause to dread a contest single-handed with that power, against which our forefathers were obliged to seek continental alliances."\*

\* Colburn's *United Service Magazine*, January, 1857.



Between 1740 and 1744 the animosity between the two nations was intense, and their resources were squandered in indirect war. From the death of Charles VI., Emperor of Germany, in 1741, the certainty of an open and ostensible rupture between England and France at no distant date was obvious to every reflecting person in Europe and among Europeans in Asia.

At Tellicherry and Myhie the grand struggle during this brief interval consisted of efforts to prevent either factory from its usual participation in the trade of pepper—a common source of quarrel between European nations in the East, and one peculiarly embittered. During that time matters generally went in favour of the English; they secured by their more direct diplomacy the confidence of the native chiefs, who admired the French more, but trusted the English better. The English continued to receive lavish expressions of French compliment, and replied by unpolished, plain spoken, but on the whole civil letters, the writers of which cared nothing for French courtesy, and had no reliance on French honour. Meanwhile, the British had taken up the French game of intriguing with the native chiefs against their neighbours, and played it well; so well, that for eight months the settlements of France were blockaded by native powers at English instigation. Among the French no man, at least no public man, understood the true policy to be pursued by a European power in India, except the gallant and wise Labourdonnais. In 1740 his Asiatic services were so appreciated in France, that not only was he welcomed to his country with acclamation, but the honour was conferred upon him of returning to the East in command of both a fleet and army. He had previously, as the reader has seen, shown his warlike genius at Myhie in a comparatively humbler although honourable capacity; at the time now under review, he equally displayed it as a sagacious statesman and naval commander. On the 13th of November, 1741, he arrived at Myhie not only with naval and military authority, but as supervisor of French trade. Upon his arrival, he opened a correspondence with the English factors at Tellicherry, proposing accommodation and friendship. He was sincere; and the language in which he expressed himself showed the goodness of his heart and the greatness of his nature. He of course objected to those demonstrations of force which the English so frequently made against the French settlements in favour of their native enemies; and requested that, in an attack contemplated by the French upon the Boyanore and Namburis, both of whom were then blockading Myhie from the land,

the English would not send succours of war either by land or sea; and if English boats came within a certain distance in spite of his warning and request, he begged that he might not be considered hostile if they were searched, to ascertain whether munitions were conveyed in them for his foes. His request was reasonable, and it would have been impossible to convey what duty and necessity dictated in language more manly, honest, just, and conciliatory. The reply of the English chief was civil and cold; he admitted the propriety of searching English boats, but took no notice of the other demands. The fact was, the predecessors of Labourdonnais had brought about a state of things which could not be removed by the kind and sincere policy of that great and good man. The French had entered upon a certain game, into which they had forced the English; and the latter were not likely to allow them to draw the stakes when there was a prospect of success to English pertinacity and common sense.

Labourdonnais stormed the native intrenchments, defeated Boyanore in the open field; followed up his successes in a short but brilliant campaign, and compelled the troublesome Indian to cede territory around the factory at Myhie, within a circumference swept by a radius of an English mile.\* The French commander and supervisor then visited the English, for whom he had a cordial respect, which they appreciated, and received him with distinguished honour. His object was to conciliate and reconcile, as a Christian obligation, and a sound policy in the Asiatic interests of France, of the prospects of which he alone, amongst all the French officers and traders of the time, is known to have had foresight.

He proposed a treaty, several articles of which were characterized by justice, good sense, and moderation. One of these articles stipulated the mutual abandonment of all outlying forts and military positions which only served as demonstrations of hostility, and created to both factories expenses destructive of the profits of their trade. The English freely accepted this point, for they had confidence in Labourdonnais, although not in his countrymen generally. Another article was that all differences between the natives and either the French or English should be arbitrated by that one of the two European powers not mixed up in the dispute, and in case the native chiefs refused the arbitration, a combined force of French and English should enforce what appeared just to both. This was too complicated a proposal for the English factors; they preferred ending their

\* *Diaries of Bombay and Tellicherry.*



own quarrels without French assistance, and they were not disposed to aid the French against the natives in quarrels which did not involve the interests of the East India Company. The proposal of Labourdonnais was transmitted for decision to the council of Bombay. After much deliberation the articles were agreed to and ratified at Bombay and Pondicherry.

The British, after the signature, became more hopeful of peace, and reduced their military forces; they also razed the forts of Putinha, Andolamala, and Termala. Labourdonnais being honest and in earnest, the French forts of Canamala, Peringature, Chimbera, and Poitera were razed. Labourdonnais appeared no more upon the western shores of India, but in other directions he made his genius and warlike power felt while the war between the two nations raged in the East. According to Raynal he was the first who suggested the desirableness of dispatching royal ships of war to the Indian seas.

On the withdrawal of Labourdonnais from Myhie, a factor named Leyrit assumed the government. He continued to maintain good relations with the English as recommended by Labourdonnais. The neighbouring native chiefs were alarmed at seeing the amity of the two European nations; and well understanding how easy it was to disturb it, they agreed among themselves to adopt whatever schemes were most likely to bring to pass some interruption to the prevailing harmony. The Boyanore, now an ally of the French, obstructed English trade, and the French, notwithstanding the binding obligations of the recent treaty, did not adopt any means to persuade or deter him from doing so, as they reaped a temporary profit by his proceedings. The King of Colestry defied and irritated the French, assuming that he did so as the champion of the English. A coolness sprang up; yet neither party was disposed to break the peace. In 1744 the chief of Tellicherry informed the president at Myhie that war between their respective countries had

been declared in Europe, but he proposed that, nevertheless, they should remain good neighbours; and to prevent any misinterpretations of the good understanding, it was agreed that their troops should not fire upon one another within sight of the factory flags. The English went still farther in their peaceful dispositions, and having been very successful in purchases of pepper, they sent eighty candies of it to Myhie. The French returned naval salutes, and restored English deserters. The two companies encouraged these peaceful manifestations, and the chief French authority in Pondicherry ratified all that had been done at Myhie. The president and council of Bombay believed that such a compromise was injurious to the interests of the English nation generally, and more especially in the East, and deemed it better that the two nations should carry on the war at home and abroad until victory decided the mastery. The English government was of the same opinion. The chief at Tellicherry was censured by the government of Bombay, pointing out to him that the French were merely espousing a truce to gain time, their Eastern forces being inferior to those of England. At Myhie this was more evidently the case, as the exchequer of the factory was drained by pompous military spectacles and continuous military expeditions, and once more, in the moment of perplexity, the Boyanore invested the place.

Such were the positions of the two powers in India, when the first bolts of war fell and shook the realms over which the mighty storm, long preparing, at last spent its force. There was a capriciousness and singularity about French and English relations in Western India. When the parent powers were at perfect peace, their factories were waging "a little war;" when there was open hostility in the British Channel, the factories were exchanging salutes, making presents, offering compliments, and vowing perpetual amity. It is necessary now to turn to other departments of the field of struggle, and to relate the progress of the war itself.



## CHAPTER LXVIII.

WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN THE EAST—SURRENDER OF MADRAS—SIEGES AND ASSAULTS OF FORT ST. DAVID BY THE FRENCH—SIEGE OF PONDICHERRY BY THE BRITISH—PEACE IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE TREATY OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

WAR between France and England having been declared, and the efforts of the traders of both nations *in some* of the stations in India to preserve neutrality having proved unavailing, the conflict began at Madras in 1746. On the 14th of September that year, a French fleet, under the gallant Labourdonnais, anchored between four and five leagues to the south of Madras, and landed six hundred soldiers, seamen, and marines. The troops moved by land, while the fleet coasted during the remainder of that day and the morning of the ensuing. About mid-day of the 15th they arrived before the city. Labourdonnais effected, without opposition, the landing of the remaining French infantry. The assailing force consisted of more than one thousand French, four hundred sepoys, drawn from the various French stations, chiefly Pondicherry, and four hundred blacks of Madagascar, called Caffres, who had been employed as a garrison in the French settlement of the Mauritius, and were well-disciplined by Labourdonnais himself. The troops landed were little short of two thousand men, and an equal number were on board the fleet to act as occasion might require.

The garrison was by no means adequate to cope with such a force, led by one of the best commanders of the age. The soldiers were two hundred, one hundred of whom were English volunteers, and were utterly inexperienced in war. These were all that could be relied upon. There were between three and four thousand Portuguese Indians who sympathized more with the French than with the British, and were not armed. The Syrian Christians and Jews were pretty numerous, and would have proved faithful to the English, but they were not warlike, and the British did not place that confidence in them which they deserved. Concerning the quality of the garrison Professor Wilson remarks:—"A letter to a proprietor of India stock, published in 1750, by a person who was evidently concerned in the government of Madras at the time, states that the soldiers were not only few, but of a very indifferent description; that the town was ill provided with ammunition stores, and that its fortifications were in a ruinous condition: the necessity for rigid economy at home having withheld the means of maintaining the establishment abroad in a state of efficiency."

The governor was summoned to surrender, and refused. A bombardment opened from the whole fleet, and the artillery landed with the invaders. Notwithstanding the weakness of the defence, the bombardment was continued five days without any attempt to storm. The troops of the garrison were worn out, the native inhabitants filled with terror, and the half-caste Portuguese disaffected; the fortifications could no longer protect their defenders, and as an assault must be successful, the president offered a ransom. Labourdonnais was too much of a politician to accept the like. He knew that if the French flag was seen floating above Madras, it would produce a moral effect not inferior to a similar triumph at even Goa or Batavia, and he insisted upon surrender. Mr. Mill describes him as coveting "the glory of displaying French colours on the ramparts of St. George," which is not accordant with the temper, character, or conduct of Labourdonnais: he was solely actuated by a sense of duty and honour, and a clear view of the policy that suited his country.

While he insisted upon capitulation, he pledged his honour to restore the settlement upon payment of a moderate ransom of 100,000 pagodas, or rather bonds for the payment of that amount were given by the president, and the city surrendered. The conduct of Labourdonnais was as gentle while a victor as it was fearless in war. He had not lost a man during the bombardment, and as he did all in his power to avoid bloodshed, only four or five English perished. His care in directing the shells, so as to inflict as little injury as possible upon private property, enabled him to effect his conquest with only the destruction of a few houses of the inhabitants. Labourdonnais gained a complete ascendancy over all with whom he came in contact; he was beloved alike by English and natives, his bearing was not that of a victor, but of a friend: even of his private fortune he contributed to alleviate distresses, which, as a French officer, he could not avoid inflicting. History has not often recorded one so brave, so good, so tender, and so just in victory as this great and glorious man.

An English fleet had been dispatched from England, but the admiral having died, the command devolved upon the senior captain, who was deficient in skill and spirit, and evaded



a conflict with Labourdonnais, remaining in the harbour of Trincomalee, so that the French admiral was in effect not only master of Madras, but of the Indian seas.

Labourdonnais had a more formidable enemy than the English—Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, and supreme chief of all the French factories in India. He was a man of superior, of even great, intellectual parts, but of the lowest moral qualifications for his post. His envy was mean, his ostentation childish, his desire of praise avaricious, his ambition boundless and utterly unprincipled. He could conceive the greatest undertakings, and carry them out with a genius corresponding to that which devised them. No want of political intrigue was too intricate for him to comprehend or disentangle; but where the risk of personal safety was concerned, he was without courage, even if the completion of his dearest designs depended upon its exercise. He had the greatness of mind which belongs to the purely intellectual, but was without magnanimity, for it was never shown towards foes or friends, vanquished or victors, competitors in the same career, or those who achieved success in any other. He was implacable in his resentments, and degraded his country by using her power to gratify them. He was desirous of promoting French glory, but chiefly that France might be under obligation to him: he wished her to be made conspicuous by a light shining from himself. Such was Dupleix, and he never displayed these evil qualities more than in his conduct to Labourdonnais, and his opposition to what that magnanimous man proposed. When Dupleix heard of the success of Labourdonnais, his mind was filled with strangely conflicting emotions. Hatred to the English caused him to receive the intelligence with gratification—envy of Labourdonnais filled him with mortification. He conceived the idea of so thwarting his own countryman as to deprive him of his honour, if not of his glory, and of so treating the English, whom Labourdonnais respected, as to humiliate their generous friend and conqueror. Like the heroic Russian general who conquered Kars, Labourdonnais became the friend and protector of the valiant and unfortunate, whom nothing but fate could conquer; but Dupleix determined to frustrate that benevolence and reverse that policy. Accordingly he refused to recognise the agreement made by the captor of Madras to restore it upon the payment of an indemnity. Labourdonnais was not a man to be trifled with, even by one so eminent and powerful as Dupleix, and he firmly insisted that the powers with which he sailed from France were inde-

pendent of Dupleix, and that he had not only acted in virtue of them, but under the instructions which he received from the French East India Company, which were characterized by moderation and forbearance. He had it in his power, Professor Wilson affirms, according to those instructions, to destroy or to restore, but not to occupy, Madras. The second of the alternatives, where so strong a nation as England was concerned, was the more politic; but independent of that, destruction and cruelty were revolting alike to the principles and feelings of the great Frenchman.

Unable to deter Labourdonnais, and afraid to take any penal measures of a direct nature against him, Dupleix sent instructions of such a kind as, while not directly overruling the admiral's orders, rendered it difficult for the French officers and agents to know which to obey or what to do. By such means the removal of goods and stores was impeded, and the fleet was unable to leave Madras (the worst point in a storm in all the Indian seas) until the monsoons began. On the night of the 13th of October a storm drove the fleet out to sea. Two of the ships were lost, all hands on board perishing except fourteen. The other vessels were tossed about, dismasted, and nearly wrecks. Dupleix refused all assistance. He next insisted that the date of the restoration of the city, which was to have been two days after the storm, should be deferred three months. Labourdonnais and the English with reluctance consented. The admiral could not remain on such a dangerous coast during the stormy weather which had set in, and on his departure the place was of course surrendered to Dupleix. He immediately violated the treaty in a manner as void of shame as of honour.

When Labourdonnais disappeared with his fleet, the nabob, at the head of a native army, attacked the French, resolving to possess himself of the great city for which the Europeans were contending among themselves. When the French fleet sailed, twelve hundred men were left behind, who had been disciplined by Labourdonnais himself after a peculiar manner, to serve on land or sea. This force encountered the numerous army of the nabob, making dreadful havoc by the rapid service of their artillery, and utterly discomfiting "the Moors." Thus the example was not set by Clive at Plassey, as is generally supposed, of a small European force well disciplined defeating vast numbers of the natives; the little army of Labourdonnais at Madras had that honour. This circumstance is noticed by Orme, but has been lost sight of by English writers generally. Dupleix's purpose



of violating the treaty with the English president at Madras was supported by the public voice at Pondicherry. Mill says (without giving authority for the statement) that Dupleix, by misrepresentation and power, induced or constrained the French merchants to present a petition against the fulfilment of the treaty. With or without such moral support as it was intended to be, Dupleix would have carried out his purpose, and he accordingly executed it with vigour. Madras was plundered; English and natives were not only deprived of their goods, but even of their personal ornaments. The most remorseless Mahratta robber was not less relenting than the French governor. Except some who effected their escape, the English as well as the chief native citizens were brought to Pondicherry as captives, not for the purpose of better security, but to mock them by a public triumphal procession, in which they were made to pass through every indignity that could be heaped upon captives; the French governor took part in the display with vain ostentation, and gave way to malignant and despicable exultation. He triumphed over his enemies and his noble rival after the manner of the most remote and barbarous times, such as had long perished from the usages of all but the weakest and most uncivilized peoples.

Among the captives who were led in that inglorious procession—inglorious to France, to Frenchmen, and above all to the execrable Dupleix—was one youth whom Providence had designed to avenge the indignity put upon himself, his companions, his country, and humanity. That youth was Robert Clive.

The present is a suitable moment in which to state something of the early life of the future conqueror, already passingly brought before the reader. The family of young Clive had been settled in Shropshire, near Market Drayton, on a small estate, for five hundred years, when he was born.\* His father was bred to the bar, married a lady of Manchester named Gaskil, and had a numerous family. Robert was the eldest child, and was born the 29th of September, 1725. Young Robert was one of the many notable persons who have confirmed the saying, "the child's the father of the man." His early boyhood revealed the characteristics of his future manhood. He was a lad of indomitable will, obstinate, tyrannical, having the faculty of attaching to him the enterprising and restless, utterly fearless in danger, even loving it for its own sake, so that the wild and reckless adventures of his boyhood were the theme of

conversation for many a mile around Drayton, and for many a year after "naughty Bob" had disappeared from the scenes of his early exploits. Pugilistic encounters, in which he displayed endurance and courage, and mimic warfare among boys, in which he was always a leader of one of the parties, afforded him much delight. At school, boxing, skating, cricket, racing, and all manner of manly games, and of wild and daring adventures, engaged his affections, to the disparagement of literary progress and education. He was the terror of ushers, his defiant spirit brooked no indignity even when consciously in the wrong, and when a mild discipline might prove successful. One of his teachers, it is alleged, predicted that "wild Bobby" would yet be a great man. Lord Macaulay declares "the general opinion seems to have been, that Robert was a dunce if not a reprobate." His lordship does not add, as he might have done, that the opinion was in neither respect well-founded. In all his wildness there was character; he was deeply susceptible of the friendships schoolboys form; he was grateful, and if not dutiful to his parents, he would yet resent the slightest reflection upon them, and speak of them with reverence, regretting his own undutifulness. He was not addicted to books, but he made more progress at school than he got credit for, and possessed a quick discernment, clear judgment, and comprehensiveness of understanding. These intellectual characteristics were, however, more displayed in action than in preparing the lessons set by his preceptors. The intuition with which schoolboys perceive the merits of their companions, led them to invest young Clive with the attributes of a lad of sense and of a hero; their confidence in his courage and capacity in every boyish freak equalled that with which his soldiers afterwards surrounded him in the broken battalions of Arcot, or followed him upon the desperate field of Plassey. Undoubtedly his chief excellences were, even in boyhood, prompt judgment in undertaking what was practicable, perseverance in carrying out what he undertook, a courage which no danger, however awful, could daunt, and a presence of mind which never forsook him in peril or difficulty. These qualities were exemplified when he climbed the steeple of Drayton Church, to the terror of the quiet inhabitants of that pretty village, as much as they were when he escaped from Pondicherry, captured, and afterwards defended Arcot, surprised French expeditions, or routed native hosts with a few hundreds of men. His chief fault was tyranny, and that he exhibited when he bullied the shopkeepers of Market Drayton, controlled his schoolfellows, and

\* *The Life of Robert Clive; collected from the family papers communicated by the Earl of Powis.* By Major-General Sir John Malcolm, K.C.B.



raised insurrections against unpopular preceptors, as much as when he arbitrarily dismissed Captain Armstrong of Bombay while serving under him in Bengal, and when he put down speculation and jobbery with a high hand in the factories during the hey-day of his power.

It is often the case in the families of men of original genius, that the last to recognise the peculiar parts of the eccentric, or supposed eccentric, person are his own near relations. This was the case with Clive. They did not perceive the mighty strength of this English Samson, and made no allowance for his weaknesses. Yet their conduct and feelings towards him hardly justified the language of Lord Macaulay. "It is not strange that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or die of fever in Madras." There is no material in the work of Sir John Malcolm which affords fair scope for placing the conduct of the family in such a light in a treatise professing to be a review of Sir John's biography. The elder Clive had so small an estate, and that encumbered, he made so little by his profession, and had so large a family, that he reasonably accepted the appointment for Robert. The ambition of the young man was, however, to become a Manchester merchant. He loved his mother's relatives, the Gaskils, in that city, and desired to enter upon the active species of mercantile pursuits which have always characterised the trade of that great city. Long afterwards, when far away from England, his thoughts often turned to the happy days he had spent in Manchester, whose scenes and associations he longed to revisit. He seemed to entertain the opinion expressed in a work called *Young America Abroad*, by Mr. Train, of Boston, United States, "I would rather be a clerk in London or New York than the head of a large mercantile establishment in Madras." Thither, however, our young adventurer went, reluctantly bidding adieu to the white cliffs of his country, which he loved so well, and for which he eventually dared and did so much.

Voyages round the Cape are still long, compared with the overland route; before steam was known, the time consumed *viâ* the Cape was still greater; and more than a century ago the voyage was rendered very tedious by the architecture of the ships employed in the Indian trade, and the nautical habits of the sailors and captains of that age. Clive, however, had a very long voyage, which consumed a whole year. It is probable that it was, on the whole, a well-spent year—one of thought and reading, of meditation upon the future,

and reflection upon the past. The ships made a several months' stay on the coast of the Brazils, and there Clive studied the Portuguese language, which was always an advantage to him in his Indian career, the traces of the Portuguese being then still fresh upon the shores of the peninsula. Arrived in Madras, he was filled with disgust. He neither liked the place, the situation, nor the people. His pay was inadequate, and he soon incurred debts which harassed his mind. He was haughty, and, like many other adventurers, bold, competent, and self-relying; yet he was shy, and consequently made few acquaintances: he was miserably lodged, home-sick, and unhappy. With all his intrepidity, like Nelson, he was a delicate youth—at all events, out of his own climate; and he suffered greatly from the exhausting heats of all low situations in Southern India. It was not, Sir John Malcolm affirms, until he had been several months in Madras that he formed an acquaintance with any family which a youth of his early associations and respectability could visit. He pined for his loved England, and for any one of the paths of honour and enterprise her industry and ambition provided within her own shores. He thus wrote to his relatives:—"I have not enjoyed one happy day since I left my native country. I must confess, at intervals when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner . . . . . If I should be so blest as to visit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented in one view." Lord Macaulay, in his review of General Malcolm's memoir, says of these passages, "He expressed his feelings softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood or from the inflexible sternness of his later years." It is surprising that the great critic should not have perceived, in Sir John Malcolm's records of the youth of his hero, sufficient evidence of a tender and even a plaintive spirit, which lived within him in spite of all his rougher attributes, as a mild bright star beaming through the darkness and turbulence of a storm. His lordship, in vindicating the nobler attributes of Clive against his calumniators, points out the benignant and affectionate aspects of his disposition, which appear so touchingly amidst even "the inflexible sternness of his later years." While neglected in Madras, he met with some encouragement from the president, who threw open to him his library, which was well stocked with the best books of the day. There Clive studied with assiduity, and, having had the foundation of a



good education, he was able to make available easily the information to be gathered amongst the president's books. He thus emerged into public life neither ignorant of books nor men, and having passed through long periods, in proportion to his years, necessitating reflection by the circumstances of retirement in which he was placed. It does not appear that military reading formed part of his studies: he had, at that time, rather cultivated commercial tastes and ambition; but, as almost every English boy loves stories of military enterprise, he would be likely, from national taste as well as from constitutional sympathy with heroic adventure, to take up books recording the valorous deeds of his loved ancestral England. The singular intelligence on all military subjects shown by him at once, when emergency called for it, strengthens the probability that military history and tactics formed part of his studies. While he lived as a writer in Madras, his conduct was not very dissimilar to that of his boyhood: he was haughty to his superiors, and, without being actually insubordinate, was so wilful as to endanger his situation. It would appear that much of what was strange and wayward, and even bold, in his behaviour arose from disease. From his early youth or childhood, some morbid affliction, perhaps an affection of the brain, which influenced his emotions without obscuring his fine intellect, attended him; and, when lonely and apparently forsaken in Madras, he twice attempted suicide. The instrument used on each of these occasions was a pistol, which both times missed fire when the barrel was pointed to his head. Having convinced himself, on the latter occasion, that the pistol was well loaded, he received the impression that Providence or destiny had designed him for some important purpose, as his life was so miraculously preserved. Such was the state of mind of this young man when borne a prisoner by the perfidious Dupleix to Pondicherry, and there paraded about for the sport of a people who were little better than their then infamous governor. It is easy to conceive how the high spirit of Clive chafed under these indignities; but his resolute will and fertile genius soon found an opportunity to assert themselves: he assumed the disguise of a Mussulman, left the town by night, and reached the English fortress of St. David in safety. Well had it been for Dupleix and for France that the wanderer who so well affected the mien and garb of Islam had been fettered in Pondicherry, or that Labourdonnais' clemency and honour had prevailed, and left the young clerk in "Writers' Buildings," at Madras, until commercial success, dismissal, or suicide

had prevented him from interfering in the field of war with the ambition of the governor of Pondicherry and the genius of French conquest.

When Clive arrived at St. David's, he, of course, found only occasional employment for his pen; he was in distress, utterly penniless. The indignation of the garrison against the French was great, and every man thought of the sword. Clive requested an appointment as ensign in the company's service, and his desire was granted. Thus began his military career, and, like another great hero, whose deeds in India afterwards won for him immortal renown—the Duke of Wellington—Clive began the routine of his profession by attention to the minutest things, acquiring the detail of discipline and the rules of war, and forming his soldiers upon his own ideal model of drill and duty. Before he entered the service he gave proof of his audacious courage by a protracted and desperate duel with a military ruffian, whose insults had cowed the civilians at the fort, but which were no sooner directed to Clive than the vaunting desperado was made to feel that he had provoked a man of lofty and unconquerable spirit. When he entered the company's military service he was twenty-one years of age. In this position he must at present remain in our narrative, until other events have passed, and new transactions bring him once more upon the stage of action.

Fort St. David was situated only twelve miles south of Pondicherry, and was one of the most important places held by the company in India. Beside the fort—a comprehensive phrase, which expressed, not only the fortifications and barracks, but the English town—there was a large native town called Cuddalore, inhabited by native merchants and bankers; there were also several large villages, and a country territory more extensive than that owned by the company at Madras. Cuddalore was an imposing and important place. Three sides of the town were towards the land, and were defended by walls and bastions; the fourth side was open to the sea, but a river flowed between it and a high sand-bank, by which the river was separated from the ocean. The agents at Fort St. David took upon themselves the government of English interests along the Coromandel coast, performing the functions of the late presidency of Madras.

Dupleix resolved to reduce Fort St. David, and thereby conquer the whole coast of Coromandel. On the 19th of December, a force consisting of about one thousand nine hundred men, exclusive of officers, marched out from Pondicherry against the English settlement.



About two hundred of this little army were Caffres from Madagascar, trained by Labourdonnais; the rest were nearly all Europeans, but a few were sepoys, and a troop of cavalry was included in the full muster. Fortunately many of the English and loyal natives of Madras fled thence to St. David's, when they perceived that Dupleix had resolved to violate the treaty of Labourdonnais; these swelled the numbers able to defend the fort to more than three hundred men; one hundred, however, were topasses. The English hired two thousand natives, a dismal looking brigade, armed with spears and shields, swords and matchlocks, bows and arrows; these men were called "peons." To these peons muskets were distributed, which, with the matchlocks already possessed by them, changed the promiscuous and comparatively harmless armament into one of some unity and efficiency. These natives were placed upon the walls and bastions of Cuddalore; the English and topasses occupied Fort St. David. The English also applied for assistance to the nabob, who, anxious to avenge his signal defeat by the French at Madras, promised an "army," if the English would bear half the expense. This the British gladly accepted. The French arrived, after a deliberate march, before the fort, and took up an advantageous position, which they had no sooner done than the nabob's army, numbering ten thousand men, appeared in sight. The French retreated, pursued by the combined forces, and losing one hundred and thirty-two Frenchmen, killed and wounded, of whom, however, only twelve were slain. After that discomfiture, Dupleix, persevering and sanguine, and relying much upon his diplomatic address with the native powers, made overtures of a friendly nature to the nabob, and while thus amusing him, without waiting for any formal arrangement of friendship, he resolved to attack the English by sea. His plan involved a surprise upon the Cuddalore portion of the defences. The scheme was well laid. The flotilla set out, every man confident of success; but a storm arose, and compelled the boats to put back. Having failed in conciliating the nabob, Dupleix sent troops into his territory, hoping thus to keep the army of his highness occupied in defensive movements, while another French force attacked Cuddalore. In accomplishing the first part of this plan Dupleix's troops committed scandalous excesses, which infuriated the nabob against the French nation, towards which his previous resentment was strong. At this juncture Dupleix received a great accession of strength. After the storm which scattered the ships of Labourdonnais, four of the finest of them made for

Acheen to refit; having accomplished that object, they returned. The nabob was easily persuaded that the reinforcements were much larger, and with that destitution of honour so characteristic of the natives of India, he changed sides and became the ally of the French. This circumstance revived the hopes of Dupleix, who described himself as apprehensive of the nabob's army blockading Pondicherry by land, and an English fleet arriving in time to blockade it by sea. Accordingly, on the 13th of March, 1747, a French force approached St. David's. The English auxiliaries skirmished and fell back; the French forced the passage of the river, and took up the position it had occupied when, on the previous occasion, the approach of the nabob's army compelled a retreat. At this juncture the fugitive English fleet was descried making for the roads. The French retreated, and, according to Orme, the retreat was almost a flight. Dupleix, fearing that his ships would be captured, ordered them from Pondicherry to Goa. Thence they continued their flight to the Mauritius, where they found three other royal ships, and the whole prepared to strengthen themselves for operations against the fleet which had arrived to the aid of the English.

The English naval reinforcement consisted of five men-of-war, under Admiral Griffin, and the squadron which had so ingloriously evaded Labourdonnais. Admiral Griffin having, as senior officer, superseded Captain Peyton, who previously held command of the squadron already in those seas, at once urged a course of activity. Having raised the siege of St. David's, he proposed carrying the war into the ports of the enemy, and declared his intention of organizing an expedition against Pondicherry itself. The land forces of the garrison of St. David's were at the same time augmented by reinforcements from England, composed of a few soldiers who came out with Admiral Griffin, a detachment of four hundred sepoys sent from Tellicherry, and from Bombay one hundred European soldiers, two hundred topasses, and one hundred sepoys. Thus the sepoys trained in Western India were coming into service, although no hope was then entertained that they would ever become so well disciplined or so extensively employed as was afterwards the case in the company's history. During the remainder of the year one hundred and fifty English soldiers arrived in different detachments, giving strength to the garrison such as it had never before possessed. At the opening of the year 1748, Major Lawrence arrived with the commission of commander-in-chief of the company's forces in India.



Nothing was done by Admiral Griffin against Pondicherry, notwithstanding his demonstrations of activity. He remained in the road of St. David's and sent out his lighter ships as scouts to watch the coast. The French fleet at the Mauritius received orders from Dupleix to convey reinforcements and money to Madras, avoiding an action with the English, but risking it in order to accomplish the object.

In the month of June the French fleet approached St. David's, as if to attack Admiral Griffin, but skilfully evaded doing so, made for Madras, landed the reinforcements, and again fled to Mauritius. Griffin set sail in fruitless search of them. Professor Wilson, in one of his notes to Mill, gives the following account of the way in which the admiral's conduct was subsequently arraigned in England, and his own explanation:—"Admiral Griffin, on his return to England, was brought to a court-martial and suspended the service, for negligence in not having stood out to sea upon first receiving information of the enemy's approach; by doing which, it was argued, he might have frustrated the object of the French squadron, if not have brought them to action. He published an appeal against the sentence, grounding his defence upon his having missed the land-wind on the day before the squadron was in sight, in necessary preparations to strengthen his own ships for an encounter with what his information represented as a superior force, by which he expected to be attacked." While Griffin was in pursuit of the French fleet, Dupleix, ever active, vigilant, and exploitful, resolved to attack St. David's before the admiral could beat back through the monsoon. He accordingly sent a fresh expedition against Cuddalore. French writers agree in awarding praise to the gallant and skilful manner in which Major Lawrence conducted the defence. He made a feint of abandoning the garrison, and the French were thus seduced to approach the walls rather tumultuously; but while applying the scaling ladders Lawrence opened a destructive fire of cannon and musketry, which caused havoc and dismay; the French throwing away their arms in precipitate flight. Lawrence was not in a condition to pursue them into the plain; he contented himself by making fresh dispositions against renewed attack.

The government of England resolved to throw forth more power upon the eastern theatre of the war. The means adopted to retrieve the losses incurred in India are thus described by an eminent historian:—"Nine ships of the public navy, one of seventy-four, one of sixty-four, two of sixty, two of fifty, one of twenty guns, a sloop of fourteen, a

bomb-ketch with her tender, and an hospital-ship, commanded by Admiral Boscawen; and eleven ships of the company, carrying stores and troops to the amount of 1400 men, set sail from England towards the end of the year 1747. They had instructions to capture the island of Mauritius in their way; as a place of great importance to the enterprises of the French in India. But the leaders of the expedition, after examining the coast, and observing the means of defence, were deterred, by the loss of time which the enterprise would occasion. On the 9th of August they arrived at Fort St. David, when the squadron, joined to that under Griffin, formed the largest European force that any one power had yet possessed in India."

Dupleix had improved the interval with his usual foresight and indefatigable zeal. He had laid in stores of all kinds in Pondicherry and Madras; the fleet from Mauritius had already landed there a large supply of silver when with the reinforcements it had evaded Griffin. Dupleix, in his own account of his feeling at the time, written years afterwards, stated that he knew the nabob would desert him as soon as he saw the English armaments, and he resolved to make the best use of an alliance which was certain so soon to terminate.\* The English at Fort St. David were urgent for active measures against Pondicherry, and they mustered a considerable body of troops which, with the fleet under Admiral Boscawen, it was believed must speedily reduce it.

Little more than two miles south-west of Pondicherry there was a fortified town called Ariancopang, to which the French of Pondicherry could retire if hard pressed there. It was deemed desirable to capture this subsidiary place, and little opposition was expected. The English had no means of obtaining plans of the fortifications, and they were wholly without information as to the resources of the garrison. An assault was ordered, and was repulsed in such a manner as was not flattering to the spirit of the sepoys and topasses in the British service, and who immediately formed a repugnance to the expedition. Batteries were erected, but the guns of the enemy were served with rapidity, precision, and valour. The French, so justly celebrated in war for their skilful defence of fortified places, highly deserved such reputation in this instance. Their sallies were conducted with daring valour, superior enterprise, and military knowledge. On the occasion of a desperate and successful sortie, the English commander-in-chief was borne away from the trenches in spite of the exertions of

\* *Mémoire pour Dupleix.*



his soldiers. At last, what the valour and wisdom of this small body of Frenchmen had so well preserved was lost by accident—the powder magazine exploded. The garrison immediately blew up the defences, and retired to Pondicherry, strengthening the force which Dupleix there possessed. Although the approaching season, when the rains would render all warlike operations impossible, demanded haste, the English, with that fatal want of promptitude by which they have so often suffered in war, tarried five days repairing the fortifications, instead of leaving the task to the small garrison intended for its occupation. They then advanced to Pondicherry. When before that renowned place they continued their slow tactics, and their measures were as timid as dilatory. The trenches were opened at nearly twice the usual distance, although there was nothing in the position of the place to require such a departure from the custom of sieges then recognised. When the trenches were formed, after much delay, it was found that they were so far off, the batteries could make no impression on the town. The cannons and mortars of the fleet were nearly useless, and in truth, although Dupleix himself was frightened, the besieged laughed their besiegers to scorn. The intrenchments were carried slowly, cautiously, and awkwardly, to within eight hundred yards of the wall, and then it was found that a morass obstructed the workmen. It was at the same time discovered that at another side of the town from which no approaches were made, the works might have been carried to the foot of the glacis. The batteries erected on the edge of the morass were silenced by the superior cannonade of the enemy.

A whole month had now been wasted, and nothing had occurred in the result of so much labour but disgrace. A council of war was called, which wisely determined to abandon the siege, for the English were incapable of conducting it; their gunners were no match for the French, and the stormy season was at hand, when the ships would be driven away, wreck and loss of life occurring, as in the case of the fleet of Labourdonnais.

When the English retired, Dupleix made much noise about his exploits, writing to France, to the Great Mogul, and to all the

petty princes far and near, declaring that few victories were ever obtained where the disproportion of force was so great. All Pondicherry was in transports; their joy was brilliant as a Bengal light. Probably had the gallant Lawrence not been captured, there would have been cause for mourning. The result upon the interests of France was greatly to enhance them; upon those of England they were depressing. So speedily do Eastern peoples forget the effects of achievements gone by, that all the prestige of English valour passed away, and they were once more looked upon by the natives as essentially unwarlike, although personally brave,—as having vast resources, but not knowing how to make use of them.

Matters were in this condition when news arrived, in November, 1748, of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which put an end to the war, and placed the two parties in India *in statu quo ante bellum*. The English restored their late dearly-bought conquest, and received possession of Madras. Dupleix did all in his power to keep up the old spirit of irritation: he gave out that the French gave the English back Madras to show their charity and to prove that the cause of quarrel did not lie with him. This appeared to the natives as *prima facie* true, and they wondered at the magnanimity and generosity of Dupleix. The English he taunted with their imbecility, reminding them that, but for events in Europe, he would have driven them out of India. Their operations by sea he derided as much as those by land, and the natives were generally of his opinion. Still somehow, by degrees, an impression gained way among the Indian chiefs that the English had an irresistible power somewhere, that, however incompetent to carry on wars in India, yet their proceedings elsewhere influenced Indian affairs so signally that no other European power made eventually successful war upon them. These impressions were fluctuating, as events raised one party or the other before the observers, whose keen eyes were ever directed to any change in the relative power of the different European interests on the peninsula.

Such were the facts and results of this brief war, which, however, only proved to be the preliminary of future conflict, as the first shock of the earthquake is often but the portent of a coming desolation.



## CHAPTER LXIX.

ENGLISH CONQUEST OF THE CARNATIC—WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE RESUMED—  
CONTINUATION OF THE STRUGGLE TO THE RETURN OF CLIVE TO ENGLAND.

THE treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle did not long secure peace between the English and French in India. From the first, it was felt to be a hollow truce. Mr. Mill, always severe upon his countrymen, attributes to them the first act of indirect hostility in their armed interference at Tanjore; but this is not just, for it was notorious that Dupleix was enraged by the peace, and made no secret of his intentions to drive the English out of India, to possess himself of the whole Carnatic,\* and to found a French dominion in Southern India. The restoration of Madras was made with the worst possible grace, and the French seldom met the English without predicting that the time was at hand when the governor of Pondicherry would rule the Deccan. The English were prevented from settling down into peaceful habits of trade by the menacing position and vaunting language of Dupleix. It was impossible for the English, after the experience of the late war, to disband their native forces and send home their European troops, while the French president retained his, sedulously strengthened his positions, as if preparing for war, and while yet surrendering Madras, and conforming to the terms of the recent peace, was opening new intrigues with the native chiefs of the same character as those which led to so much conflict during so many years. The aim of this ambitious and mischievous man was the same after the peace as during the war: his thirst for conquest and glory was not slaked; he still hoped, by the same means as he had already used, to achieve the end he had so long contemplated. The English determined to foster alliances, and to strengthen their own position.

The first event which broke the calm on the eastern shores of the peninsula after peace was proclaimed was an alliance with Syajee† or Sahujee, prince of Tanjore, on the part of the English. This prince had been deposed by his own brother, a common incident of Indian history. He invoked the aid of the English, and, in return, offered to them the fortress and district of Devi-Cotah, well placed on the banks of the Colaroone. As soon as it was known at Colaroone that an English expe-

dition was preparing at Tanjore, Dupleix affected great horror of the ambitious projects of the English. They took means indirectly to inform him that the place they desired to obtain was of value for trading purposes only, and they were not about to wrest it from its legitimate sovereign, but to conquer it, as his ally. Dupleix pretended that it was necessary for him to seek a counterpoise to English power in another direction, in consequence of this movement, whereas he had secretly been planning the measures already, which he represented as forced upon him by English ambition.

In April, 1749, the Rajah of Tanjore set out from Fort St. David's, accompanied by an English force consisting of four hundred and thirty Europeans and one thousand sepoys. The late war had brought this latter description of force into use as an important arm of Indo-European armies. The artillery attending this brigade was only eight small pieces, four of which were mortars: there was, however, a battering-train sent by sea. The land force was under the command of Captain Cope.\*

After a march of ten miles, the British arrived before Devi-Cotah, meeting no regular force, but annoyed by a guerilla warfare throughout the march. This expedition was managed still worse than the siege of Pondicherry, in the war so lately concluded. No communications were kept up with the fleet, on board of which was the heavy ordnance, and although only four miles distant, the army was ignorant of its position. Several shells were thrown at the town from a distance which rendered them harmless. The besiegers retreated, and returned to St. David's after as bootless an expedition as ever an army undertook.

The shame of this affair so affected the restored English government of Madras, that they determined upon another expedition, which was sent under Major Lawrence by sea, Admiral Boscawen commanding the flotilla. Mr. Mill thus notices the motives and feelings prevailing at Madras in ordering the new attempt upon the coveted prize:—"They exaggerated the value of Devi-Cotah; situated in the most fertile spot on the coast of Coromandel; and standing on the river Colaroone, the channel of which, within the bar, was capable of receiving ships of the largest burden, while there was not a port from Masulipatam to Cape Comorin which could receive one of three hundred tons: it

\* The reader, by turning to the geographical portion of this work, will find much assistance in tracing the course of the contending armies, an assistance without which any account of these conquests must be scarcely intelligible.

† Mill, Murray, and others call him Suhajee.

\* Mill erroneously assigns it to Major Lawrence.



was true the mouth of the river was obstructed by sand; but if that could be removed, the possession would be invaluable."

The troops were conducted to the place of debarkation, from whence the walls of the fortifications were battered until a breach was made; but the river flowed between the walls and the English, and the passage was so commanded from the walls and woods, that unless a large portion of the force could be pushed over at once, the hope of success was small. There were, however, no means for the accomplishment of such an object, and the second expedition was in danger of failing like the first, when a ship-carpenter, named Moore, devised a raft by which four hundred soldiers were passed over at once. When the raft was formed, a new difficulty presented itself, it could not be moved across. Moore bravely volunteered to swim the river, bearing a rope which, fastened to the opposite side, would enable the raft to be pulled across. To facilitate the accomplishment of this project, a heavy fire was opened which compelled the enemy to retire some distance; the brave fellow swam the flood, and executed his task during the night. The troops crossed, the trench was mounted, and the place was stormed. This was, however, not easily performed, and through the rash conduct of Clive, the future hero of India, many valuable lives were lost. He led the storming party. At the head of some Europeans, followed by seven hundred sepoys, he showed the most daring intrepidity, but advancing too fiercely he was separated from his men, who, being without orders, were thrown into confusion, and nearly all cut to pieces. Clive escaped unhurt, after passing through the most imminent dangers.

Major Lawrence, whom Lord Macaulay describes simply as a sensible man, devoid of the attributes of a great soldier, acted at Devicotah, as well as in his other enterprises, in a manner worthy of higher commendation from the great reviewer. He led his whole force across, and, with a skill in which Clive was at that time deficient, he carried the place, almost without loss. The reigning rajah offered to concede to the English the fort and the surrounding territory, if they would abandon the cause of his brother, in whose name they made war. To the disgrace of the British they accepted the overture. Mill says that but for Admiral Boscawen, they would have surrendered him into the hands of the actual rajah. Orme, however, gives a totally different account of the whole transaction. The only redeeming feature in the affair was, that a small allowance for the deposed rajah was exacted by the victors.

The conduct of the English was such that while the French had no pretence to complain of it, both the rajahs had. The English had been the ally of the man against whom they had made war for a bribe which they coveted, and when they found him ready to bestow as much, they basely deserted the cause of the man on whose behalf they took up the enterprise. The only apology for their conduct in that part of their policy was, that his representation of the public feeling of the people of his lost dominion was false, and its subjugation would have involved much cost and loss of men. The errors, politically and morally, into which the English fell in their conduct with the rival nabobs of Tanjore were not such as they had often incurred previously, but were peculiar to the occasion. They were so anxious to make a powerful counterpoise to the French, that honour and honesty were forgotten; "they stuck at nothing," as a writer more expressive than elegant remarked. The English at first made mistakes in policy, chiefly from applying the principles of international law known and recognised in Europe, to people who were ignorant of those principles, and who could see no propriety or justice in their application when those laws were pleaded or proposed as bases of treaty, grounds of amity, or reasons for redress. But in the short and inglorious war with Tanjore, the conduct of the English was truly oriental, and, on the whole, suffered by comparison, morally, with the policy of the reigning rajah. A time had now arrived when it was very difficult for any European nations to conduct relations with the natives on any principles regarded as right and necessary in Europe, although all made a show of doing so. "The situation of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be such without a pretext in old laws or recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion, by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the west, and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If it were convenient to treat a nabob as an independent prince there was an excellent plea for doing so,—he was independent in fact. If it were convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the court of Delhi, there was no difficulty,—for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to treat his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held during the pleasure of the great Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of these views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands represented him as the undoubted.



legitimate, the absolute sovereign, whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was in fact dissolved, and that though it might be decent to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relic of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan."\*

The English had begun to understand this state of things. What Lord Macaulay describes as the views of Dupleix may be said of his rivals and enemies at this time, and explains the readiness with which in Tanjore the English espoused the cause of one brother against another in pretension to the rajahlik. "The most easy and convenient way in which an European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth, of some glittering puppet, dignified by the title of nabob or nizam."† When once the English adopted this view of Indian policy, they practised it with a success of which their Tanjore escapade gave no promise.

In the transactions thus recorded, Clive was a very prominent actor. He had only begun his military career when tidings of peace between England and France having arrived, the conflicts in India were for a time stopped, and Madras being restored, Clive retired from his temporary soldiering to resume his duties in "Writers' Buildings." He could use both sword and pen, but the sword best became him. Although historians say little of him in connection with the siege of Pondicherry—as indeed the records of English historians are altogether meagre concerning that event—yet Clive greatly distinguished himself. His distinction appears, however, not to have been for skill, but for courage. The same was the case in the war with the Rajah of Tanjore, for which he volunteered as lieutenant from his desk at Madras. Both before Pondicherry and in Tanjore, he was remarkable for the influence he gained over the sepoys, the excellent discipline to which he brought them, and the readiness with which they followed him into danger, where he constantly and recklessly placed himself. He understood the sepoys better than any other man at that time in India; he had a remarkable capacity for discerning their feelings, and a knack of winning their confidence; as he said afterwards, "I twined my laurels round the prejudices of

the natives." It does not appear that he had analyzed the springs of those prejudices, or penetrated the philosophy of the native religions; but as conscience did not prevent him accommodating himself to their superstitions, there was no barrier between him and them, such as usually exists where an officer is scrupulous in religious matters. A friend of his, named Hallyburton, who probably set Clive the example of disciplining the natives, and who possessed great talent as a regimental officer, was shot dead by one of his own sepoys, to whose prejudices he had given unconscious offence. This produced a deep impression on the sensitive heart of Clive, and seems to have impressed him with the necessity of going any and every length with the peculiarities of the native mind. It was Clive's policy from the beginning to put much confidence in such native officers as appeared to him to possess military talents, and through them he exercised more influence over the natives than by direct intercourse with them. All, however, whether officers or soldiers, adored him for his heroism, and they conceived at once a pride in following a leader who always chose the path of peril, and assumed the most imminently dangerous position for himself. After the short war with Tanjore, Clive again returned to his desk, and probably would have remained in pursuit of commerce, notwithstanding his military taste and his recent daring exploits, if new events had not called him again to arms. Lord Macaulay at once describes the condition at this time of the man, and the empire whose fortunes he was destined to influence so signally, in a single paragraph:—"While he was wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of England attained a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French crowns; but there arose between the English and French companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important, a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane."

It is true that the ensuing war was *in its ultimate results* for the possession of all those regions over which Tamerlane once rode upon the tide of conquest; but the immediate conflict was for *ascendancy* only in a single province of the many territories which made up the mighty empire of the sovereigns of Hindostan. His lordship is virtually correct in describing the war as between the two European companies, although in fact Dupleix, in spite of his company, or by misrepresentations designedly made, so far as he had their consent, strode over the land in the

\* *Critical and Historical Essays; contributed to the Edinburgh Review.* By Thomas Babington Macaulay. *Essay on Clive.*

† *Ibid.*



love of conquest, with the morbid desire for military glory peculiar to a Frenchman, and with all the animosity prevalent in those days in the minds of the French towards England.

The unfortunate expedition of the English to Tanjore strengthened the influence of Dupleix with the native princes, and enabled him, with some show of reason, to assure the French company that the English were bent upon aggrandizement, in order to counteract which it was necessary for him to make extensive native alliances, to weaken the power and influence of native rulers friendly to the English, and, should occasion arise, to assert the supremacy of the French nation by arms. The French company were apprehensive of the policy of Dupleix and the power of England. They desired to enrich themselves by trade, and by territorial resources, acquired gradually and as peacefully as possible. They wished by trick and treaty to get hold of the lands which lay nearest to their factories, but dreaded warlike expenses, and protested that above all cares committed to Dupleix, stood the responsibility of breaking peace with the powerful English. The government of France sympathised with the company, with which (as was shown in a previous chapter) it was identified in a manner more closely than the English or any other European government was with the Eastern trading company which they respectively supported. The French king knew that however slow to arm the English were as a nation, they were still slower in laying down their arms when once taken up in war; and his majesty, through the company, enforced a policy of peace with the English, but gradual and safe encroachment upon the natives. Dupleix, however, continued in a subtle and ingenious manner to turn all his instructions from home to his own purposes, and while affecting to be very amenable to his government and the French company, to act independently, and carry on step by step his projects for ousting the English, and becoming lord of Southern India.

The time at length arrived for the new era of conflict, and, for the English, of strangely mingled reverses and victories, until their chequered fortunes assumed the character of a great and deeply interesting romance, made actual by the interposition of all-powerful destinies. Lord Macaulay describes the occasion of the approaching struggles, and the policy which availed itself of such occasion, in the following manner:—"In the year 1748 died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India, Nizam-ool-Moolk, viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his

son, Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the richest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient nabob, whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan. But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, grandson of Nizam-ool-Moolk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung; Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled state of law in India, it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganized, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in their recent war on the coast of Coromandel. Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a nabob of the Carnatic, to make a viceroy of the Deccan, and to rule under their names the whole of Southern India, this was indeed an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred French soldiers, and two thousand sepoy\* disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of the confederates. A battle was fought; the French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mohammed Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the nabob of Arcot, and who owes to the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly, and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic."

It is not necessary in this history to trace the conflicts which followed. The fortunes of the various native princes concerned changed rapidly as the scenes in a diorama, but amidst all these changes the genius of Dupleix triumphed, and wherever the French fought they maintained the reputation for gallantry which their nation had acquired throughout the world. In the various tests to which their bravery was put, their officers did not particularly distinguish themselves, and their chief leaders were sometimes incompetent. Dupleix himself avoided all exposure to danger, alleging that the smoke and noise of battle were unfavourable to his political

\* This is an exaggeration of the number of sepoy by several hundreds, but there was a Caffre force which had landed at Pondicherry attached to the expedition, which brought the number of black troops up to one thousand nine hundred.



speculations. He, however, provided scope for the courage of his countrymen, if not ambitious of displaying his own.

Nazir Jung was slain by a chief who had, with his followers, betrayed their ruler. The Deccan fell into the hands of Mirzapha Jung. The conquerors entered Pondicherry in triumph. They were received with demonstrations of joy and honour unbounded. Not only did the cannon thunder their welcome as became such scenes and such victories, but the sacred name of religion and of its Author was invoked as sanctioning the intrigue and cruelty by which the results were brought about; public thanksgivings were observed in the churches, and even the Portuguese could not celebrate a *Te Deum* after some sanguinary atrocity more heartily than the French of Pondicherry did on this great occasion. It was in the capital of French India that the new nizam was installed in his grand office of viceroy or soubahdar of the Deccan, a circumstance not only flattering to the vanity of Dupleix, but calculated to cement his power and increase the prestige of France. In the public procession, Dupleix sat in the same palanquin with the soubahdar, and took precedence of all the nabobs, rajahs, and petty princes who came in the train of the great viceroy. The French governor was declared governor of southern India, from Cape Comorin to the Kistna river, and was appointed to the command of seven thousand cavalry, one of the highest honours conferred by a native prince. The French mint was proclaimed as exclusively authorised to coin money for circulation in the Carnatic. Dupleix amassed riches. The money and jewels which he received as *presents* were estimated at more than a quarter of a million sterling in value. The revenues he derived personally could not be computed, as there were few sources of revenue open to the viceroy in which he had not some part.

The nizam's death, which occurred soon after his elevation, afforded an opportunity to Dupleix still further to enhance his authority, by nominating another prince to the viceregal throne. The influence of the European adventurer became boundless, and he used it very arbitrarily, arrogantly, and harshly. Some of his acts were unnecessarily and wantonly vain-glorious, others were political though boastful. Amongst the most signal displays of his power and love of glory was the erection of a pillar where he had effected the triumph of Mirzapha over Nazir Jung. The four sides of this column bore, in four different languages, an inscription proclaiming his triumph. Around the spot where this monument of his achievements stood, a considerable town

was built, to which he gave the name of Dupleix Fatehabad, which means "the town of Dupleix's victory."

The English sent a few troops under Major Lawrence to thwart or check the progress of the French, but ostensibly to resist the invaders of the legitimate viceroy and nabob, whom they continued to recognise. It was one of the chief modes of displaying hostility on the part of the two rival European powers to take opposite sides in all disputed successions, and as there was nearly always a disputed succession somewhere in the neighbourhood of their settlements, there was of consequence a perpetual contravention by intrigue, or military succour supplied to the native parties in contention. Major Lawrence was so disgusted with his allies that he abandoned them as impracticable; the French more than once were obliged to leave their friends on the same grounds, but the pertinacious and untiring policy of Dupleix, together with his tact and finesse, enabled him to restore amity between his soldiers and their allies. The retirement for a time from India of the brave and indefatigable Major Lawrence facilitated the designs of Dupleix, and rendered his military ascendancy more complete; for Lawrence was the only man in India capable of assuming a large command, although he was indifferently supported, and poorly rewarded both by the authorities in Madras and London. Clive had not gathered military experience, but in him was genius adequate to the great task of retrieving all that was lost, and asserting for his country a power and influence in India which the wildest dreams of her most imaginative sons never conceived.

The desperate affairs of Mohammed Ali at last demanded some efforts on the part of the English different from the feeble demonstrations they had previously made. Although nabob of the Carnatic, his own patrimonial territory was small, and Trichinopoly, its chief stronghold, was in daily danger of falling before the siege of the rival nabob and the French. Upon the districts of Tanjore and Trichinopoly both competitors had fixed their attention as the centres of their respective influences and claims of authority and power. The accounts given by writers on Indian affairs of the pretensions and rights of the competing nabobs are very contradictory. Mill professes to rest his account upon Orme, but his statements of Orme's opinions do not agree with that writer's own representations of the views he held; and it is scarcely of sufficient importance to the general English reader to analyze the evidence of the comparative claims of Mohammed Ali and Chunda



Sahib, and of the right of either to be independent of the Mogul, even if it were practicable to unravel so intricate a skein of treachery and intrigue. Dr. Wilson says:—"The Hindoo princes of Tanjore and Trichinopoly had never been subdued by the Mogul, and although at times compelled to purchase the forbearance of the Mohammedan states of Bejapore or Golconda, they had preserved their independence from a remote date. The expulsion of their native princes was owing to domestic dissensions, which transferred Tanjore to a Mahratta ruler, and gave Trichinopoly to a Mohammedan. The latter was a relic of the Hindoo kingdom of Madura, and according to original authorities, Chunda Sahib obtained possession of it, not under the circumstances described by the European writers, who were avowedly ill-informed of the real merits of the case, but by an act of treachery to his ally Minakshi Amman, the reigning queen, whose adopted son he had zealously defended against a competitor for the principality—grateful for his support, and confiding in his friendship, the queen gave him free access to the citadel, and he abused her confidence by making himself treacherously master of the fortress."\*

To reduce Trichinopoly was now the work of Chunda Sahib, and the prince offered to resign on terms to the French. The English interposed and insisted that, instead of this arrangement, Chunda Sahib should be recognised as nabob of the Carnatic, Mohammed Ali retaining Trichinopoly. The French answered with insolent contempt; and the tardy English, whose minds seemed full of confusion at the magnitude of the events passing around them, made some determination to resist. The allied army of Chunda Sahib and the French advanced to Arcot, contrary to the advice of Dupleix, who recommended the nabob to march upon Trichinopoly itself, while yet the hesitating English were dubious what course to pursue. An English force, under Captain Gingers, left Fort St. David to intercept, or at all events harass, the enemy. The sahib had encamped his forces on the great road between Trichinopoly and Arcot, when the English came up with him, and made dispositions for battle. The chief force of the British was sepoys, and there was also a body of Caffres, deserters from the French, and from the Dutch, who also had employed this description of soldiers. Some of these were natives of Mauritius, others of Madagascar, and various other blacks, not natives of India, were comprised under the general designation. The English com-

mander called a council of war, in which an action was opposed by some; those who were for attacking the enemy differed widely in their opinions as to how the attack should be carried out. The time consumed in dispute, and the anxious manner of the English officers, dispirited the troops, particularly their own countrymen, who went into action without that manifestation of daring spirit characteristic of Englishmen. The battle being begun the enemy replied with a spirited fire, and advanced to meet their assailants boldly. The native troops and Caffres in English pay fought well; but the English soldiers turned and fled, leaving their native allies to do battle alone. No attempts to rally the English were successful, not even the derision of sepoys and Caffres could move them to return to their duty, and the battle was lost. The exultation of the enemy was accompanied by tokens of supreme contempt for the beaten English; their sable comrades were equally prompt to upbraid them with their cowardice. It is but just to the English nation to say that only a few of the Europeans in the detachment were British: they consisted, for the most part, of Germans, Swiss, and Dutch, French and Portuguese deserters; all these, except, perhaps, the Dutch, were in awe of the French, whose reputation for discipline and military science, together with the late splendid victories of themselves and their allies, had spread an impression amongst all nations in India, save only a portion of the English, that they were invincible. The British retreated, and took post on the high road near Utatoa, but again fled upon the approach of the enemy. Once more the English drew up in order of battle at Pechoonda, but a third time fled before the foe, and, as from the previous encampment, without firing a shot. The conduct of the European portion of the British was thoroughly dastardly, and the officers were without influence or authority who commanded that portion of the troops. Most of the officers newly arrived from England proved worthless. The officers of the company's forces were inferior to those of the royal army as men of intelligence; their manners entitled but few of them to be received as gentlemen by their companions in arms in the royal forces: but they were more adventurous, and were better fitted for Indian campaigning every way. General intelligence, with commanders at that time, when opposed to native armies, was not important; knowledge of native character, especially in war, aptness to take advantage of every turn on the field with rapidity, contempt for mere numerical superiority, and, above all, promptitude in an enemy's presence, were the essential qualities which the com-

\* "Historical Sketch of the Kingdom of Pandya:" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. iii. p. 199.



pany's officers possessed in a much greater degree than their comrades of the royal forces.

Having thus abandoned the country to their pursuers, the fugitive British found themselves in comparative safety under the walls of Trichinopoly. Chunda Sahib and his European coadjutors pursued, but not with sufficient rapidity. Chunda was too leisurely in his military movements, being fonder of the pomp of war than of its action. On his arrival, he withdrew from the side of the town where the company's forces were encamped, and in the opposite direction laid siege to the place. There is no ascertaining the strength of this army. Dupleix, after his return to France, described the native army alone as thirty thousand men. M. Law, by whom the French were commanded, stated, in his work entitled *Plainte de Chevalier Law, contre Sieur Dupleix*, that at no time did the entire force before Trichinopoly exceed eleven thousand eight hundred and sixty, of whom only six hundred were Europeans, and that, when afterwards a detachment was sent from that army to relieve Arcot, only six thousand six hundred and eighty men remained to conduct the siege. Mill says he is much more inclined to believe Law, as Dupleix was "one of the most audacious contemners of truth that ever engaged in crooked politics." At all events, the siege was so feebly conducted that, had the English beneath its walls shown the least enterprise and courage, the enemy could not have maintained it for many days. M. Law, in his vindication of himself, declared that he had no means to conduct the siege, no battering guns, no heavy cannon fit for guns of position, and that he had been three months before the place before any material of war suitable to his position reached him. If these statements be correct, they add much lustre to the honour, ability, and valour of the few Frenchmen who kept the power of Mohammed Ali at bay, and compelled the English to remain crouching under the city walls. M. Law threw the blame of the delay in making a capture of the place to the intrigues of Dupleix, who had entered into correspondence with Mohammed Ali, and secured his assent to deliver up the city, so that he (M. Law) was sent, not to besiege, but to receive it; Dupleix relying rather upon the dexterity and profoundness of his own schemes than upon the chivalry and skill of his soldiers.

During the delay and incompetency of the French, the English officers were actively engaged in quarrelling with one another as to the respectability of themselves personally, and of the royal and the company's armies comparatively. As commanders of men they were paltry and powerless; they had not even that

quality in which Englishmen are so seldom deficient, and which soldiers express by the rough word "pluck." It was not only in that branch of the English army in India that such a spirit prevailed: Major Lawrence had found it an insuperable obstacle to his own efficient command, and declared that the British officers were objects of supreme contempt to their native allies. At Madras, St. David's, and elsewhere the state of things was the same. The fighting qualities of the English were dormant, because the officers sent from home were not chosen for their military qualities, but for reasons pertaining to party, or to family interest. The necessity of taking and of defending the besieged city became, at last, obvious to both armies, for its situation gave it a relative importance to the war which could not be overlooked long even by the incompetent persons then holding power in the English interest in that part of India. Mr. Mill describes it thus:—"The city of Trichinopoly, at the distance of about ninety miles from the sea, is situated on the south side of the great river Cavery, about half a mile from its bank; and, for an Indian city, was fortified with extraordinary strength. About five miles higher up than Trichinopoly, the Cavery divides itself into two branches, which, after separating to the distance of about two miles, again approached, and being only prevented from uniting, about fifteen miles below Trichinopoly, by a narrow mound, they form a peninsula, which goes by the name of Seringham; celebrated as containing one of the most remarkable edifices, and one of the most venerable pagodas, in India; and henceforward remarkable for the struggle, constituting an era in the history of India, of which it was now to be the scene."

During these events, Clive was once more active, and in a manner calculated to give him that experience which he required. When the troops were sent out to intercept or annoy the sahib, Clive, then twenty-five years of age, was appointed to an office partaking both of the civil and military: he was made commissary of the forces, with the rank of captain. He was witness of the shameful flight of his countrymen at Volcondal, but was not in a position to do anything to retrieve that disaster. He brought up, from time to time, the reinforcements, contributed something to their discipline, became thoroughly acquainted with the country whence he drew supplies for the forces, obtained useful information for the authorities at St. David's and Madras, was brought more into connection with them, so as to gain their confidence and learn their peculiarities. He was thus made acquainted with the arts of provisioning an army, and



also with the mode of organizing resources, which task, to a considerable extent, devolved upon him. By his frequent and intimate converse or correspondence with all the authorities, military as well as civil, concerned, he was able to penetrate the weak points of British policy and arrangement, and to discern who were the weak men by whom vigorous measures were impeded or marred. In a short time he gained such experience as enabled him to request, to obtain, and, with reasonable grounds of confidence, to undertake, the responsibility of a separate command, and to verify the high opinion always expressed of him by the noble-minded and valiant Lawrence.

According to Mill, the idea of relieving Trichinopoly by a diversion originated with the authorities at Fort St. David or Madras. Sir J. Malcolm, with more probability, attributes the idea to Clive; and Lord Macaulay endorses that view. Clive, according to these authorities, pressed upon the attention of his superiors the danger to which Trichinopoly was exposed, and the consequences that would ensue upon its fall, and requested to be allowed the command of a detachment, by which, threatening Arcot, he might compel the allies to raise the siege of the endangered city. This request was complied with, and, from that moment, the tide of fortune turned, and made 1751–2 years to be ever memorable in Indian history.

The advance of Clive upon Arcot, and its capture, is one of those stories in history which is related nearly in the same way by all historians. Every writer, whether fragmentary or voluminous, repeats the preceding narrator of this transaction. The most condensed and, at the same time, graphic account is that of Dr. Taylor, although partly copying Mill *verbatim et literatim*:—"His force consisted of two hundred Europeans and three hundred sepoy, commanded under him by eight officers, six of whom had never been in action. His artillery amounted only to three field pieces, but two eighteen pounders were sent after him. On the 31st of August, 1751, he arrived within ten miles of Arcot; it was the day of a fearful storm; thunder, lightning, and rain more terrific than is usual, even in India, seemed to render farther advance impracticable; but Clive, aware of the impression such hardihood would produce on oriental minds, pushed forward in spite of the elemental strife. Daunted by his boldness, the garrison abandoned both the town and citadel, the latter of which Clive immediately occupied, giving orders that private property should be respected. As a siege was soon to be expected, he exerted his utmost diligence to supply the fort, and made frequent sallies to

prevent the fugitive garrison, who hovered round, from resuming their courage."

Mr. Mill describes the result in the following words:—"In the meantime Chunda Sahib detached four thousand men from his army at Trichinopoly, who were joined by his son with one hundred and fifty Europeans from Pondicherry; and, together with the troops already collected in the neighbourhood, to the number of three thousand, entered the city. Clive immediately resolved upon a violent attempt to dislodge them. Going out with almost the whole of the garrison, he with his artillery forced the enemy to leave the streets in which they had posted themselves; but filling the houses they fired upon his men, and obliged him to withdraw to the fort. In warring against the people of Hindostan, a few men so often gain unaccountable victories over a host, that on a disproportion of numbers solely no enterprise can be safely condemned as rash; in this, however, Clive ran the greatest risk, with but a feeble prospect of success. He lost fifteen of his Europeans, and among them a lieutenant; and his only artillery officer, with sixteen other men, was disabled. Next day the enemy was reinforced with two thousand men from Vellore. The fort was more than a mile in circumference; the walls in many places ruinous; the towers inconvenient and decayed; and everything unfavourable to defence; yet Clive found the means of making an effectual resistance. When the enemy attempted to storm at two breaches, one of fifty and one of ninety feet, he repulsed them with but eighty Europeans and one hundred and twenty sepoy fit for duty; so effectually did he avail himself of his feeble resources, and to such a pitch of fortitude had he exalted the spirit of those under his command. During the following night the enemy abandoned the town with precipitation, after they had maintained the siege for fifty days. A reinforcement from Madras joined him on the following day; and, leaving a small garrison in Arcot, he set out to pursue the enemy. With the assistance of a small body of Mahrattas, who joined him in hopes of plunder, he gave the enemy, now greatly reduced by the dropping away of the auxiliaries, a defeat at Arni, and recovered Congeveram, into which the French had thrown a garrison, and where they had behaved with barbarity to some English prisoners; among the rest two wounded officers, whom they seized returning from Arcot to Madras, and threatened to expose on the rampart, if the English should attack."

Mill's account of the force detached from the sahib's army at Trichinopoly does not agree with the narrative of Monsieur Law, in which he professed confidence. According to



the chevalier, five thousand two hundred and eighty men were withdrawn from his army for service at Arcot. Clive returned to Fort St. David at the close of the year. As soon as the enemy learned that he had left Arcot, they collected their forces and marched into the company's territory, where they committed great ravages. Both Madras and Fort St. David had been nearly denuded of troops, to enable Clive to take the field against Arcot. Some troops afterwards arrived in these fortresses; but they were dispatched as reinforcements to Clive, so that when the enemy began their raid into the company's territory, there were no means of making head against them. In this emergency, Bengal supplied some soldiers, native and European, and Clive was not long in augmenting these by levies in his own presidency, so that by February he was able to go out against the invaders. The principal portion of the troops at Arcot made a junction with him, and he found himself at the head of a small but, in his hands, formidable force. As soon as he approached the enemy, they broke up their camp, but intended to turn their retreat to account by making a sudden assault upon Arcot, the residuary garrison of which was not by any means sufficient to man its defences.

At every period in Anglo-Indian history, there has been a sufficient number of sepoys and their officers in the English pay, corrupt or disloyal, to endanger the garrisons or enterprises of the British in most conjunctions of great danger. It was so in this instance. Two native officers had agreed to open the gates to the enemy; the plot was discovered, and the traitors seized. Accordingly, when the army of the sahib came before Arcot, not finding their signals answered, they concluded that they were themselves betrayed by those whom they trusted. Little confidence existing among natives, even when religion and native land might be supposed to bind them most together, it was a natural inference, in a war of succession, when the people were not much interested in either side, to suppose that the officers had made a double treason for a double profit. The sahib's army retired; but Clive was then on his way to Arcot to prevent the step which the sahib contemplated, and which his keen mind had anticipated. The enemy, knowing of his approach, prepared a surprise. Clive having heard of their retreat, naturally concluded that they would elude him; and was therefore astonished when the guns of the sahib opened with a furious cannonade upon his advanced guard, in a situation affording serious advantage to the assailants. A battle began, and Clive soon found that his opponents had mustered all their forces, and

that the effort was one of a desperate nature, the hope of altering the fortunes of the war to the disadvantage of the English being concentrated upon that action, which continued all day with unremitting fury.

Clive felt that the artillery power of the enemy was so great, that unless it could be seized, he must next day be defeated. At ten at night he detached a party for that purpose. The night was unusually dark. By a detour, the detachment came upon the rear of the enemy's park; silently approaching the spot, no surprise being apprehended by the enemy, the infantry and artillerymen at that post were instantly overpowered, and either slain or driven away. The army of the sahib immediately dispersed, disheartened, and holding the name of Clive in terror. The boldness, suddenness, and judgment of the enterprise had invested it in native apprehension with something of the mysterious; and Clive was regarded by the lower orders as endowed with supernatural power.

As soon as this event terminated, Clive was ordered to Madras. This step was imprudent, as the enemy might have once more gained heart by his absence. The French troops were, however, recalled at the same moment to Pondicherry, in ignorance of Clive's withdrawal; and without such a *point d'appui* as the French afforded, the sahib could not have re-collected his demoralized men. The object of the recall of Clive to the presidency was to send him and his troops to Trichinopoly, where, from what had already transpired, there was really nothing to fear.

The conduct of Clive was appreciated at Madras, and the fame of his heroism spread over all India. Still the remarks of Lord Macaulay are undoubtedly an exaggeration, when he says of the feeling at Fort St. George, "Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command." His lordship, however, conveys what is obviously true when he expresses the opinion, "Had the entire direction of the war been entrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except when he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they had met elsewhere." Their opinion was certainly reasonable, and the circumstances which made it so were connected with the system of favouritism which, instead of a just and patriotic recognition of merit, influenced all royal military appointments; and the insolence, contempt, and neglect with which officers of superior merit



in the company's service were treated by the traders, amongst whom there existed an envious and yet arrogant feeling towards all professional men.

During these events Clive showed not only the audacity of courage for which he had during several years received credit, but attributes of a higher order of soldierhood were conspicuously displayed. He proved himself to be remarkably subordinate to authority. Mr. Mill, and Lord Macaulay following Mr. Mill, represent this as surprising, seeing that his youth was so turbulent. Sir John Malcolm and Dr. Hayman Wilson affirm that the subordination of his military conduct, notwithstanding his frequent disagreement in opinion with official superiors, was in harmony with the habits of his earlier years. Sir John Malcolm severely criticises the expression of Mr. Mill; and the learned professor of Sanscrit at Oxford observes:—"There is nothing in the history of his adolescence to warrant the application (of the term turbulent); he seems to have been stubborn and dogged rather than turbulent." His ambition was animated by a passionate patriotism; and his jealousy for the glory of his country was united to a policy statesmanlike and wise. This was exemplified in his destruction of the pillar of Dupleix, when, in his career of victory, he arrived at the place where that monument was erected. He felt that it was an insult to his country, and therefore razed it; but he also judged that so long as it remained a memorial of French prowess and success, it would influence the superstitious natives to respect the power of France. Not satisfied with destroying the proud column, he swept the city itself from the face of the earth, and by this decisiveness, filled the imagination of the Asiatic soldiers of both armies with ideas of his boldness, comprehensiveness, and invulnerability, as well as with a fatalistic notion that victory sat upon the banners of the English, while the day of French glory had set.

When Clive was ready to take the field against the French and Chunda Sahib, who still remained before Trichinopoly, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and, as senior officer, assumed the command. Lawrence was probably not a politician, but he was well acquainted with the politics of the Carnatic and of the whole Deccan; he was a man of shrewd sense, and great penetration of character. As a soldier, he was fit for high command; and, had he served in any army where promotion went by merit, he would not have ranked as a major, while he commanded, with ability and good service to his country, armies in the field. Clive was delighted at the arrival of Lawrence, as so few of the English officers

were competent for any portion of responsibility; he had also a high sense of the military capacity and personal excellence of the major, which feeling was reciprocated by the senior of the two gallant friends. Both were incapable of jealousy, and exulted in each other's glory; so that it would have been difficult to find two persons of great talent more likely to co-operate efficiently.

While Clive was preparing his forces at Fort St. David's for the relief of Trichinopoly, the rajah sought assistance from Mysore, whence a large army was dispatched to his aid, accompanied by a strong division of Mahratta mercenaries, which had already served with Clive in the neighbourhood of Arcot. According to the Chevalier Law, the French and allied army did not then amount to more than fifteen thousand; this statement was confirmed by the French Company, but Dupleix informed the French public that it was nearly twice the number. Whatever its force, it held its position firmly in spite of the Mysore and Mahratta auxiliaries of Mohammed Ali. Such was the position of things when the army under Lawrence marched against the besiegers. Dupleix ordered Law to intercept this force, which was impossible, as that gallant man, already embarrassed by the impracticable orders of Dupleix, had extended his force to keep up an effectual blockade, in the hope of starving the besieged; so that his lines were, to use his own language, "weak at all points," and only by his superior tactics could he deceive the Mysore chief as to his actual numbers and actual weakness. He urged Dupleix to organize the means at Pondicherry of intercepting Lawrence, assuring him of the utter incapacity of his exhausted force to deal with his numerous foes. Dupleix, arrogant and deficient in military science, renewed his orders, which were of course not obeyed, because impossible. The result was, that the little army of Lawrence arrived to the relief of the beleaguered city. The French removed their forces to the island of Seringham, against the wishes of Chunda Sahib, who believed whatever Dupleix said as to what ought to be done in the circumstances. The French burned a large portion of their baggage and munitions. Ormesays that stores of provisions were also thus consumed, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Rajah of Mysore or the English. The chevalier, who knew best, and wrote like a man of truth and honour, declares that he had no stores of provisions—that his supplies were small, and he was becoming apprehensive of extremities.

Anxious to carry matters with his usual rapidity, Clive suggested to Lawrence that it



would be desirable to place a division of his army at the other side of the Colaroone, so that supplies to the French might be effectually intercepted. Lawrence pointed out the danger of dividing his army, lest each might in turn be attacked and overpowered. Nevertheless he believed that, if in Clive's hands, the measure would be carried through, and he gave him command of a division of his army to accomplish the proposed task. Clive executed the commands imposed upon him, or rather exercised efficiently the discretion confided to him, for Lawrence allowed him to take his own course. The measures of Clive were soon proved to be necessary, for Dupleix dispatched D'Auteuil with a powerful force and large convoy for the relief of the garrison at Seringham. Clive interposed on D'Auteuil's line of march, who, afraid to meet the conqueror of Arcot, retired into a fort whither Clive pursued him, capturing the fort, garrison, and commander, with all the provisions and munitions of war intended for Law. Lawrence, meantime, cannonaded Seringham with such judgment and effect, that the French greatly suffered, and, in addition, hunger began to inflict its miseries. Chunda Sahib's soldiers deserted in large numbers. The Mahratta legions did not like to fight against Clive, and went over to him in bodies. Chunda Sahib at last threw himself upon the mercy of the King of Tanjore, who had also become an ally of Mohammed Ali. The Tanjore general gave his sacred promise of protection, but no sooner had the sahib entered the camp than he was placed in irons. While he was thus situated, the French surrendered, prisoners of war, to Major Lawrence. There then arose disputes among the Mysorean, Mahratta, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly chiefs, as to the custody of the sahib. Major Lawrence, to deliver him out of their hands, proposed his confinement in an English fort. The rajahs retired to take this proposition into consideration, but the cruel King of Tanjore ordered the captive to be assassinated, and so settled the debate. Dupleix charged Major Lawrence with the murder, which the false-hearted Frenchman knew well was an act impossible to the brave and good man upon whom he sought to fix so infamous an imputation. The French East India Company charged Dupleix with the intention of imprisoning the unfortunate nabob, and making himself, or causing himself to be made, by his influence at the court of Delhi, soubahdar, or viceroy of the Deccan. Dupleix, however, was in possession of the fact, that the nabob intended to break faith with him as soon as his English and native enemies were mastered. Thus cruelty and deceit prevailed

amongst all the authorities in the Deccan, and prepared for that breaking up and recasting of all the governments there which eventually ensued.

While affairs were proving so disastrous to the French throughout the Carnatic, the industrious and crafty Dupleix was, nevertheless, carrying on vast intrigues in another direction. In his plots with the various claimants for the viceroyalty of the Deccan, he acted through an agent named Bussy, a man almost as cunning and unscrupulous as himself. The Mogul refused to recognise the French *protégé* for the viceroyalty, and conferred the title and authority on Gazee-ood-Deen, eldest son of Nizam-ool-Moolk, and the legitimate heir of the coveted post. The competitor of Gazee was Salabat Jung, who was in possession, and refused to surrender his honours. The incursions of the Mahrattas so enfeebled and harassed the Mogul empire, that the padishaw was unable to enforce what he had commanded, and the intrigues of Bussy were so cunning and so constant, that Salabat Jung held his honours; while Dupleix, through his satrap Bussy, virtually ruled the Deccan, and indirectly exercised extensive influence over the Mogul. This great influence might have contented his ambition, but as the Carnatic was a part of the Deccan, he considered nothing secure until the whole of the region so designated was at his feet. Unfortunately for the peace of India, and of the English, the subtle genius of Dupleix found scope, and out of the very materials of defeat he evoked renewed influence.

When Major Lawrence had won Trichinopoly, he was preparing to march through the province, and subject all opposition before Mohammed Ali. He urged that prince to muster his forces and accompany him, but was astounded to find that Mohammed had, unknown to his English ally, gained the alliance of Mysore by promising to give to the rajah the city of Trichinopoly when the French were driven away. This promise, Mohammed, of course, never intended to perform, but now the Mysore rajah, at the head of twenty thousand men, demanded its fulfilment. The Mahrattas, too, had been led to entertain hopes that it should be given to them, both by the possessor and by the promised possessor. They now demanded that the Rajah of Mysore should surrender his claim to them as a reward of their services, indemnifying himself how he could; and, at the same time, they intimated to the actual sovereign that the true construction of his promises to them was that they should have the city. Mohammed refused to fulfil any



promise, pleading that extreme necessity justified promises which there was no intention of performing—a plea the force of which his tormentors felt, because it accorded with their own principles, but they were not therefore the more ready to mitigate their demands. The chief of Trichinopoly at last persuaded the Mysorean chief to accept Madura, with the promise of receiving Trichinopoly also within two months. He pretended to accede, but went away resolved upon revenge. Major Lawrence advised the president of Madras to deliver up the city to the chief of Mysore, or else to seize him and the Mahratta leader until security was taken that they would not join the French. The company's representatives did nothing, the only thing which appears to have lain within the scope of their talents.

Dupleix was at once made acquainted with all these transactions, and from that hour resolved to make another effort to regain ascendancy in the Carnatic. He opened correspondence with all the aggrieved parties, and had the audacity to correspond secretly with Mohammed Ali himself. His offers to them all were most alluring, and so timed and put in such form as to make it their obvious policy to keep his secrets and prepare to betray one another when the opportune moment for so doing should arrive.

In consequence of his intrigues, as well as those set on foot directly by the disappointed allies of Mohammed, the standard of revolt was raised in various districts under the government of the ill-starred prince, whose victories were as disastrous as defeats, and even more dishonourable. Gingee was considered a strong place, and the governor refused to render allegiance to Mohammed Ali. The English undertook to reduce it, and fortune once more forsook their standard. The garrison consisted chiefly of French soldiers, and the English considered its capture would put an end to the war in Mohammed Ali's dominions. This was the opinion of the civilians by whom Major Lawrence and Captain Clive were overruled. Lawrence expostulated in vain: he pointed out a really feasible plan of procedure; but the heads of the traders at Madras and Fort St. David were turned with success, and they issued orders with a self-confident air, as if by their wisdom all had been accomplished, which only the talents and experience of Lawrence, and the genius of Clive, had achieved. The repulse of the English at Gingee was so signal, that the predictions of Major Lawrence were fulfilled. The French gained heart, and the feeble natives began once more to believe that they could conquer.

Dupleix, although badly sustained from home, found means to reinforce the troops at Gingee, so as to enable him to operate in the field. He, in fact, organized another army, and sent them under the walls of the astonished English of Fort St. David. The approach of the French to that place was anticipated at Madras, and one hundred Swiss were sent by sea to strengthen it. These men were sent in open boats, contrary to the advice of Lawrence, whose opinions were overruled by the self-confident, pragmatist, and incompetent council: the result was another painful fulfilment of Lawrence's predictions—the boats and troops were captured by a French man-of-war. Dupleix, cognizant of the intention of his enemies, and calculating upon their infatuated ignorance and conceit, took his measures accordingly, and with success. This was the first direct violation of the treaty of peace between the two countries. Hitherto the French and English only met in hostility as the allies, and acting under the ostensible orders, of contending native chiefs; in capturing English boats and troops, he assumed to make war upon England without the orders or acquiescence of his government, which afterwards held him responsible for his conduct.

Major Lawrence went forth against the new army, by which English territory was entered with hostile intent at a time of peace between the two nations. His force was chiefly from the nabob's army, consisting of a division of four thousand men. He had, in addition, a brigade consisting of four hundred Europeans and one thousand seven hundred trained sepoys. The French were greatly inferior in numbers, but superior in quality. They had about the same number of regular infantry, and consisting of the same proportions of Europeans and sepoys; but the European force in the English service was made up chiefly of mercenaries. Dupleix's European infantry were not wholly French, but were chiefly recruits lately sent out, and were physically inferior to the Europeans in English pay; but they felt that they were fighting the battles of their own nation, which gave them an ardour such as the mercenaries in the English ranks could not feel. The French had a rabble of native adherents; but only a few were enrolled as soldiers. Making up for the disparity in this respect, the French had a fine regiment of cavalry, numbering five hundred men. The nabob's troops with the English consisted partly of cavalry, but of the worst class. Major Lawrence offered battle, which was not accepted; but, making a feint of retreating, he lured on his vain-glorious enemies. The battle was short and decisive; the French



were signally defeated; but the nabob's cavalry would not pursue, but, instead, plundered the French camp. The energy and skill of Lawrence were displayed with striking effect in this action, and he was seconded by his friend and lieutenant, Clive, with his usual splendid military ability.

As the Mysorean general hovered about Trichinopoly, Lawrence could not follow up, in the direction he wished, the victory he had gained, nor could he spare troops from his little army for separate services. The ever-daring and inventive Clive undertook, with two hundred undisciplined European recruits, and such natives as he could muster, to capture the fort of Covelong, defended by the French. He collected some natives, and formed of them two sepoy companies of one hundred men each; and with this small detachment repaired to Covelong. The European recruits were morally and physically inferior: the sepoys were wholly ignorant of the use of arms. A shot fired from Covelong killed one of the Europeans, when they all took to flight. Clive, with the utmost difficulty, succeeded in inducing them to return to their duty. Siege was laid to the fort; but the sentinels being alarmed by a loud discharge of artillery, fled and hid themselves: one of them was found, after diligent search, concealed in a well. Clive remonstrated, persuaded, rallied them on their timidity, appealed to their manhood, and, by his own example, roused in them the sense of manliness, so that they became courageous, well disciplined, and ready to dare whatever their leader's example pointed out as due to honour and duty. Probably no band of timid, unsoldierly men were ever made so much of in so short a time, or made to perform so much. During this time he was ill from the effects of fatigue, anxiety, and the climate. The French garrison surrendered, and Clive occupied it with a portion of his small force, somewhat augmented by deserters from the French, and men of a similar stamp to those he commanded when they first came under his plastic hand. Scarcely had he taken possession, when a French force was sent from Chingleput to succour the garrison, ignorant of its capture. Clive laid an ambush, and, by one volley, placed *hors de combat* one hundred French soldiers, he then charged them, killing and wounding many and capturing three hundred. The

rest fled panic-struck, hotly pursued by their prompt assailant to the gates of Chingleput. To this place, reputed at the time to be one of the strongest fortifications in India, he laid siege. His artillery was very inadequate; but he effected a breach, and was about to storm it, when the French commander capitulated, on being allowed to retire with his men. After these events Clive returned to Madras, where the incapable men who had thwarted him so often, regarded it as a great honour for him to be made the object of their commendations and attentions. His health now obliged him to seek repose, for his late achievements, inferior in ability and activity to none of his previous ones, were performed in weakness and suffering. He married a lady named Maskelyne, sister to the astronomer royal, of scientific notoriety. Macaulay describes her as "handsome and accomplished," and adds, "her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her." Very soon after they had received the congratulations of their friends upon their marriage, they embarked for England, where Clive arrived after an absence of ten years, several of which were spent with renown to his country and himself. He had redeemed her fallen military reputation in India, humbled the gifted Dupleix, repressed French power in the Deccan, saved, with his coadjutor and friend, Lawrence, the Carnatic, at all events for the time, from becoming a French province, and filled India and Europe with the fame of his bravery and military resources. His departure from India was an irreparable loss to the English, as they were soon made to feel. Indeed, both before he left India and subsequently, wherever he or Lawrence was not, defeat and shame attended the English name from the arrival of Dupleix at Pondicherry. It is customary for writers to give all the glory to Clive, who knew the worth of Lawrence too well to accept it. When, on the young hero's return, the directors of the East India Company offered him "a sword set with diamonds," he nobly refused to accept it unless Lawrence received one of equal or superior value. He regarded that fine officer as his teacher and benefactor; and the latter was immoderately proud and fond of his pupil and *protégé*.



## CHAPTER LXX.

BRITISH CONQUEST OF THE CARNATIC—*Continued*: FROM CLIVE'S RETURN TO ENGLAND TO THE EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.

WHILE Clive was reducing forts, getting married, receiving jewelled swords at the India-house in London, and enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* at Manchester and Market Drayton, Lawrence was bravely battling against all odds, ill-supported by the vacillating English at forts St. David and St. George. Dupleix had won over certain Mahratta chiefs, who, with three thousand men, marched to reinforce his army, which was then about to encounter Lawrence at Bahoo. On their way, the Mahrattas heard that the French were defeated, and that Lawrence and Clive were in the field; they immediately marched into the British camp, declaring that they would not fight against these two heroes, whom the gods favoured, but would serve under them against the disturbers of the peace of Southern India. The armies went into what is called in Europe winter quarters; and Dupleix, who had no competitor in diplomacy, succeeded in regaining by that means all the influence of which the British had deprived him in the field. Mysoreans and Mahrattas declared open alliance with the French. The designs of Dupleix were penetrated by Major Lawrence, and such advice given by him as met the necessities of the occasion; but although it belonged to his profession to judge of the practical bearing of Dupleix's new alliances, and the company's civil servants acknowledged his competency to pronounce an opinion, they did not in any case follow it, so as to carry out any plan of contravention to the schemes of the French director-general. Even the advice and commands of Lawrence to the officer in authority at Trichinopoly were not attended to, the civil officers of the company overruling his orders. On one occasion Lawrence detected a plot to assassinate Captain Dalton, the officer in command of the garrison at Trichinopoly, by the Mysorean general Nunjeragh and the Mahratta chief Marao, and upon assassinating the English officer, to seize the city. Lawrence ordered Dalton to seize them, as a conference proposed by them for their own purposes would afford opportunity. The president and council of Madras gave Dalton contrary orders; the captain was not assassinated, but the detected traitors were left free to carry on all their treasons except the seizure of the city. Mill blames the morality of Lawrence's orders, and

admits the soundness of the policy; but it is obvious that Mill had not made himself acquainted with the whole case. Dr. Hayman Wilson defends Lawrence in the following terms:—"In justice to Major Lawrence, it must be remarked that this advice was given only upon the detection of a plot, set on foot by the Mysorean general, to assassinate Captain Dalton, and surprise Trichinopoly, there being no open rupture yet even with Mohammed Ali, much less with the English. 'It was on the discovery of this,' says the Major, 'that I proposed Dalton should seize on the Maissorean and Morarow, which he might easily have done by a surprise, as he often had conferences with them; and I must own I thought, in justice, it would have been right to have done it, but the presidency were of another opinion.'"<sup>\*</sup> Never did man pursue a policy with more heroic obstinacy than Dupleix. Mr. Mill places his conduct in this respect in a correct light, when he thus describes his condition, resources, and prospects in 1752:—"Dupleix, though so eminently successful in adding to the number of combatants on his side, was reduced to the greatest extremity for pecuniary supplies. The French East India Company were much poorer than even the English; the resources which they furnished from Europe were proportionally feeble; and though perfectly willing to share with Dupleix in the hopes of conquest, when enjoyment was speedily promised, their impatience for gain made them soon tired of the war; and they were now importunately urging Dupleix to find the means of concluding a peace. Under these difficulties Dupleix had employed his own fortune, and his own credit, in answering the demands of the war; and, as a last resource, he now turned his thoughts to Mortiz Ali, the governor of Vellore. He held up to him the prospect of even the nabobship itself, in hopes of drawing from him the riches which he was reputed to possess. Mortiz Ali repaired to Pondicherry, and even advanced a considerable sum; but finding that much more was expected, he broke off the negotiation, and retired to his fort. The contending parties looked forward with altered prospects to the next campaign. By the co-operation of the Mysoreans, and the junction of the Mahrattas, the latter of whom, from the abilities of their leader, and

<sup>\*</sup> Lawrence's *Narrative*, p. 39.



their long experience of European warfare, were no contemptible allies, the French had greatly the advantage in numerical force. In the capacity, however, of their officers, and in the quality of their European troops, they soon felt a remarkable inferiority. Lawrence, without being a man of talents, was an active and clear-headed soldier; and the troops whom he commanded, both officers and men, appeared, by a happy contingency, to combine in their little body all the virtues of a British army. The European troops of the enemy, on the other hand, were the very refuse of the French population." Lord Macaulay, following Mill, and partly adopting Dupleix's own account, which is little to be relied on, gives a similar picture of the helplessness of Dupleix, except as he relied solely on his own genius. His lordship quotes Dupleix's own expression, that with the exception of Bussy he had not an officer on whom he could place the least reliance. Most of these statements are greatly exaggerated, and some of them totally untrue. It suited the circumstances in which Dupleix was placed, when defending himself in France against the French Company, to declaim against that body for its neglect of his requisitions; but the fact was, its supplies were lavish until it became convinced that he was squandering them in wars dangerous to France, and contrary to the commercial interests of the French Company trading to the east. It is astonishingly strange that such writers as Mill and Macaulay should adopt the assertion of Dupleix, that he had no good officers! Did he not persecute the intrepid, politic, and gifted Labourdonnais? Was it not by his own unmilitary measures that the Chevalier Law, a brilliant officer, was paralyzed before Trichinopoly? D'Auteuil, Latouche, and other officers in his service, showed superior parts, but were rendered powerless by the complication of his own schemes, or the genius of Lawrence and Clive. Lawrence, in his own account of the transactions which arose out of the fertility of Dupleix's tricks, describes the efforts of the French officers at Bahoor and Trichinopoly to keep their men up under heavy fire as most gallant, skilful, and honourable. The men sent out to Dupleix were no doubt such as he described them—children, thieves, and galley slaves; but he had also fine French regiments, such as met the armies of Europe with renown; and he had large supplies of Madagascees, who had been thoroughly trained in the Mauritius on French principles of drill and discipline, and well officered by gentlemen of the French army and navy. He had also good engineer officers and artillery officers, such as the

French military schools produced. It was not of their officers and French soldiers that Chevalier Law and other French officers complained during the discussions which occurred in France after the return of Dupleix, but of the want of military knowledge and courage of Dupleix himself; and of the impracticability, in a military sense, of schemes which grew out of Dupleix's political speculations and alliances.

As to his resources, he had enriched both himself and the company's Indian exchequer, by his influence over the resources of Southern India, and by the great accessions of territory he acquired. When Mr. Mill says that the French company was poorer than that of England, he overlooks the fact,\* that the government of France itself favoured the French East India Company, the resources of the state having been applied to the aggrandizement of the company, until the exchequer of France was exhausted, the extravagance of the company's agents in India, and their love of incessant war, having been one of the potential causes of that exhaustion. The whole history of these transactions shows that the estimate formed of Lawrence in the above passage by Mill, and copied by Macaulay, Taylor, Murray, and numerous others, places his talents below the reality. As to the superiority of the English officers to the French, there is nothing related on Mr. Mill's own pages to prove the assertion. There were no men up to the period to which the history is now brought, able to cope with the French officers, when Lawrence or Clive was absent. Whether in the open field or in the defence of fortified places, French military science was in the ascendant in almost every instance, except when Lawrence or Clive, or both, were present by their heroism and ability to turn the tide of battle. An accurate and careful examination of the authentic documents of the time, French and English, will confirm the allegation that the general current of modern historians, following Mill, and more recently Macaulay, have exaggerated or misstated the disadvantages of the French. Dupleix emerged from the temporary cessation of arms in 1752, consequent upon the weather, in a condition to menace the English, and sustain the prospect which his ambition and hope presented, that with proper management of his native allies he would humble the English in the Carnatic, perhaps expel them from Southern India, and himself reign supreme in the vast and magnificent dominions of the Deccan.

In the first week of the year 1753 the two armies took the field. The French were

\* See chapters on the French Company for trading in the East.



very superior in numbers, especially in cavalry. Five hundred European infantry, sixty European cavalry; two thousand sepoys; four thousand Mahrattas, nearly all cavalry, commanded by Morari Rao, an able officer well acquainted with European modes of warfare, comprised the French movable army, independent of the large forces before Trichinopoly. The English army under Major Lawrence was composed of seven hundred European foot-soldiers, two thousand sepoys, and fifteen hundred of the nabob's irregular cavalry, who would any time turn aside to plunder, however urgent the requirements of honourable war.

The French showed good generalship, facts again confuting Mr. Mill's disparagement of their officers. They avoided a general action, employing their superiority of cavalry in cutting off convoys, so that Lawrence and his troops were exposed to great fatigue, and sometimes he was obliged to march with his whole army to ensure the safe arrival of a large convoy at its destination. This desultory war continued until the 20th of April, when a letter from Captain Dalton informed Lawrence that he had scarcely fifteen days' provisions in the magazine of the city. He had made a certain Mohammedan chief his storekeeper, and, like the Turkish pashas during the war with Russia, so this more ancient specimen of Mohammedan officer and ruler sold the provisions for his own profit. Lawrence determined on marching at once to the relief of the place. His march was attended by many casualties. The nabob's troops deserted in great numbers, so did some of the sepoys, and even of the Europeans. Dupleix's agents were busy offering better pay. Sickness had also made inroads upon his force. When he arrived at the place, and completed effective garrison arrangements, he had so small a force remaining for field operations, that the prospect of carrying on the war with advantage, without considerable reinforcements, seemed very gloomy. His European detachment was reduced to five hundred men, two thousand sepoys were at his disposal, and the nabob attached to these infantry forces a division of three thousand ill-paid and insubordinate horse. Scarcely had Lawrence arrived when French reinforcements hastened to strengthen Nünjeragh. These consisted of two hundred Europeans and five hundred sepoys. The forces were now relatively such that the French and their allies could not capture the place, and the English and the nabob could not raise the siege. From the 6th of May, 1753, to the 11th of October, 1754, the conflict was sustained—Lawrence and his troops performing

prodigies of valour, for which he received only praise, and that was scantily bestowed by his own countrymen in the chief settlements of India.

The most condensed account, and at the same time sufficient in detail, which has appeared of these transactions, amongst recent publications, is that by Hugh Murray, Esq., F.R.S.E. He thus describes the defence of Trichinopoly by Lawrence:—"The major was then able to open a communication with the southern districts for a supply of necessities, and obtained some assistance from the Rajah of Tanjore, whose alliance, however, like that of all Indian princes, wavered with every variation of fortune. It became impossible in this scarcity to supply the inhabitants of so great a city as Trichinopoly, who, to the number of four hundred thousand inhabitants, were compelled to quit the place, and seek temporary shelter elsewhere; and the immense circuit of its walls was occupied only by the two thousand men composing the garrison. The provisioning of this important fortress now became the principal object of contest, the entire strength of both sides being drawn around it; and the French, with an immensely superior force, placed themselves in such positions as enabled them to intercept completely the entrance of convoys from the south. The brave Lawrence twice attacked, and, though with very inferior numbers, drove them from their posts, and opened the way for his supplies. On no former occasion, indeed, had the valour of the English troops, and their superiority to those of the enemy, been more signally displayed. The garrison, however, had nearly, by their own supineness, forfeited the benefit of all these exertions. One morning at three o'clock, the guard having fallen asleep, the French advanced to the assault, applied their scaling-ladders, made themselves masters of a battery, and were advancing into the city, when several of the soldiers happening to fall into a deep pit, their cries alarmed their companions, some of whom fired their muskets. The assailants thus conceiving themselves to be discovered, made a general discharge, beat their drums, and advanced with shouts of *Vive le Roi*. Happily a considerable body of British was quartered near the spot, who were immediately led on by Lieutenant Harrison to such an advantageous position, and directed with so much judgment, that the foremost of the storming-party were soon cut down, the ladders carried off or broken, and all of the enemy who had entered, to the number of three hundred and sixty, were made prisoners. Thus the enterprise, at first so promising, caused to them a loss



greater than any sustained by their arms during the course of this memorable siege. Soon afterwards, however, an English detachment, being sent out to escort a convoy of provisions, was attacked by a corps of eighteen thousand natives and four hundred Europeans. An inexperienced officer, who had the command, drew up his men in small parties at wide intervals. Suddenly Morari Rao and Innis Khan, with twelve thousand Mysorean horse, advanced with loud shouts at full gallop, and charged this ill-constructed line. Our countrymen had scarcely time to fire one volley, when they found their ranks broken by the enemy's cavalry. Deserted by the sepoys, they were left, only one hundred and eighty in number, without any hope of escape; upon which they determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible. The whole were either killed or taken, including a company of grenadiers, who had acted a prominent part in all the late victories.

"Amid these gallant exploits, the siege of Trichinopoly was protracted a year and a half, during which neither the French nor their numerous allies obtained any decisive advantage. Mr. Mill considers the object as very unworthy of such strenuous efforts; yet it ought to be remembered that the company were deciding on that spot the destiny of the Carnatic, and perhaps the very existence of their establishment in India. To have yielded in such circumstances might have realized the views of Dupleix, whose boast it had been that he would reduce Madras to a fishing-village." The same author thus notices other transactions by which the fate of the war was more influenced:—"Important events were meantime taking place at the court of the Deccan, where Bussy with his followers was dictating or directing every movement. This influence indeed he seemed entitled to expect, both from the generosity and prudence of Salabat Jung, who had been raised by the French to his present lofty station, and by them alone was maintained in it against the Mahrattas, and Gazee-ood-Deen, whom the Mogul had authorised to expel him. The latter, however, as he was approaching with a prodigious army, died suddenly, not without suspicion, perhaps unjust, of having been poisoned by the adherents of his rival. Salabat being thus relieved from apprehension, the great men around him, viewing with much indignation the thralldom of their master to a handful of strangers, urged him to adopt measures for extricating himself from this humiliating situation; and at their suggestion he took certain steps, which were favoured by a temporary absence of Bussy. The pay of the troops was withheld, and on plausible

pretexts they were broken into detachments, and sent into different quarters. The foreigner, however, on his return immediately reassembled them, and his own force aided by the alarm of a Mahratta invasion, enabled him to dictate terms to the soubahdar. He procured the discharge of the hostile ministers; and taking advantage of the accumulated arrears, demanded and obtained, as a security against future deficiencies, the cession of an extensive range of territory on the coasts of Coromandel and Orissa, including the Northern Circars. This, in addition to former acquisitions, gave the French a territory six hundred miles in extent, reaching from Madapilly to the Pagoda of Juggernaut, and yielding a revenue of £855,000."

Thus, while a war in the Carnatic drained the exchequer of Pondicherry, Dupleix and his accomplice, Bussy, took care by their power at the court of the Deccan, to acquire territory, and receive far more than sufficient to compensate any such drain; while the Carnatic itself was, in the prospective policy of Dupleix, soon to belong to France, and England, utterly vanquished, would be compelled to withdraw from Madras and the shores of Coromandel.

Whatever might be the difficulties which presented themselves around Trichinopoly, or elsewhere in the Carnatic, it is obvious that Dupleix had encouragement to persevere, and found the means of doing so by his negotiations in the capital of the Deccan itself. He had there assumed a position which rendered it incompatible with the continuance of French power to allow a rival in the fairest province of the government of the soubahdar, a government which virtually belonged to France, and to Dupleix as her representative. The interference of the English at all in the Carnatic was a proclamation that the influence of Dupleix at the court of the soubahdar was an usurpation. The displeasure of the French East India Company with Dupleix was now considerable, the French government having been importuned by that of England to put a stop to his career. The English government could no longer be deaf to the reclamations of their own East India Company, and intimated to the French ministry that they could not any longer be burthened, directly or indirectly, with the expenses of war at a time of peace. A conference was held in London, when all parties agreed to place the blame of the bloodshed in India upon Dupleix. He seems to have found no advocate either in the French Company or the French ministry. Mr. Mill, who can always see the errors and defects of his own countrymen more easily than those of their deadliest ene-



mies, has afforded him a posthumous defence which inculpates more by its dubious extenuations than would a direct censure. The opinion formed of Dupleix by his countrymen was the correct one: he involved his country in a sanguinary war to gratify her love of glory and his own. Unwilling to take up the quarrel in Europe, they gave up Dupleix, his conquests, and his schemes, and conceded all that England demanded. This spirit of concession was no doubt greatly influenced by the fact that, during the London conferences, England sent out a powerful fleet to India—an example which France was unable to follow.

M. Godheu was appointed to supersede Dupleix, and with special instructions to terminate hostilities. He arrived in Pondicherry on the 2nd of August, 1754, and conducted negotiations in the spirit of his mission. The siege of Trichinopoly was raised in virtue of the treaty which followed, and all acts of war were stopped on both sides. Godheu was no doubt influenced by the fact which exercised so much weight with the French ministry—the transmission of a powerful fleet and large military reinforcements; otherwise it is difficult to suppose that he would surrender everything for which the French had fought, and concede all for which the English had appealed to arms. Such, however, was the result of his mission to Pondicherry. The French in India were deeply mortified at two clauses in the treaty, one of which recognised Mohammed Ali as nabob of the Carnatic, thus giving to the English an ostensible triumph; the other depriving the French of the vast territory lately acquired, and thus inflicting upon them in the eyes of the natives defeat in the most obvious and substantial form. But there was no use in murmuring, or resisting Godheu, for Admiral Watson had arrived with three line-of-battle ships, and a sloop of war, and nearly a thousand English soldiers. Godheu had brought with him fifteen hundred French; but the naval force of Watson, and the material of war which he took out, constituted a preponderating power; besides, it was known that the English had determined, if necessary, greatly to augment their forces, and France was not in a condition at that time to maintain, either in Europe or the East, a naval war with England.

When Godheu, and Saunders, the president of Madras—a very commonplace man when compared with his French competitors—had settled all matters thus satisfactorily to the English, they returned home, leaving their nations, as they supposed, at perfect peace with one another. But these appearances were illusory; the respective relations of the two nations to

the native powers were too complex not to necessitate disputes by developing conflicting interests. Both nations had maintained so intricate a diplomacy that it was next to impossible to retrace their steps, and stand to one another *in statu quo ante bellum*. The policy of Dupleix was conceived with so much genius, and worked out by him and Bussy with so much foresight, and with the contemplation of so many contingencies and consecutive developments, that it irretrievably committed the French. They had placed themselves in such a position that they must go on in a career of conquest and intrigue, until the thrones of the Indian chiefs were at their disposal, or sink into mere traders craving permission to traffic from petty chiefs, and in continual danger of losing all chance of mercantile success, in consequence of the superior trading capacity which the English and Dutch everywhere displayed. The roots of French diplomacy had so spread and fastened among the courts of Southern India, that there they must remain, unless cut out by the sword. The English eventually found that solution of the difficulty the only one, and did not shrink from undertaking the laborious task.

The English found their own treaties with the natives so complicated that it was no easy matter for them to carry out thoroughly and heartily, as was their interest to do, their treaty with the French. Thus, when the treaty was signed, the general of the Mysorean army before Trichinopoly refused to recognise it, and remained before the place until events in Mysore compelled his return. One of the causes of that return was the appearance of a French force in aid of the soubahdar of the Deccan to collect tribute, which the Mysoreans refused to pay, and which the soubahdar would never have demanded but for French instigation, which was offered in consequence of the English affording assistance to Mohammed Ali, their old *protégé*, for whom they warred so long and so well, in order to enable him to collect the revenues of Madura, an enterprise in which they conquered all opposition, but could raise no revenue. The British entered into a money bargain with Mohammed, which was at once mean and impolitic. They agreed to enforce the collection of his revenues in certain rebellious districts, if he would give them half the sum raised. This was a bargain intended by the English to serve both parties; they could not afford to pay and employ troops for the rajah's benefit. It eventually served neither Mohammed Ali nor his patrons. After a fruitless attempt to collect the revenue, the British retired from the task baffled and chagrined.



Salabat Jung and Bussy, the French agent at the court of the Deccan, at the head of the French troops marched against the Rajah of Mysore, to collect tribute due by that prince, or alleged to be due, to the soubahdar. At the same time, the Mahrattas made one of their raids upon the territory, so that the Mysorean general withdrew from the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly to defend his master's lands. The rajah feared the Mahrattas, and therefore pretended submission to the viceroy. The English now displayed their triumph by investing their *protégé* with the insignia of his office as Nabob of the Carnatic, at his capital of Arcot. The efforts made by the British to gain the submission of the zemindars and polygars, so that Mohammed might receive his revenues, offended the French: they represented that the employment of English troops to interfere in the internal affairs of the Carnatic was in violation of the recent treaty. The real ground of annoyance with the French was the prospect of the nabob having a revenue, and being thereby enabled to defend himself. The governor of Vellore refused to recognise the nabob's authority, at all events, so far as revenue was concerned; and the determination of the English to enforce that authority was pleaded by the French as a ground for military interference in the refractory governor's behalf. The English, intimidated by this demonstration and the strength of Vellore, withdrew their troops. Other chiefs in his neighbourhood followed the example of the ruler of Vellore, and the whole of that part of the Carnatic became disturbed, and continued so for years. Madura itself was suddenly seized by one of the boldest of the khans, and held in defiance of the British. The French were solicitous to interfere more decidedly by arms, but the intrigues at the court of the Deccan kept them busy: they, however, perpetually incited the petty chiefs and district governors to revolt, being as determined as ever to prevent Mohammed Ali from obtaining the rule of the Carnatic, while they construed every attempt of the English to establish that rule (the treaty with the French having fully recognised it) into covert war against France. Nothing could be more evident at the close of 1755 than that the war between the French and English must be fought over again so far as the Carnatic was concerned, and that nothing but the entire prostration of the power of one or the other could ensure quiet.

The French, for a time, lost influence at the court of the Deccan, and negotiations were opened with the English at Madras to send troops to protect the capital, Bussy and his French soldiers being at the same time dis-

missed. The English were at this juncture occupied in Bengal in a life or death struggle, and could not make the tempting offer available. The prime-minister of the soubahdar caused the retiring forces of the French to be treacherously waylaid and attacked; but Bussy behaved with such intrepidity and skill, that he resisted all assaults until succours arrived. The soubahdar sued for peace, which was granted at the still further expense of his independence, and Bussy became more potential than ever. The breaking out of war in Bengal caused both parties to send troops in that direction; but the English, still persistently resolved to effect the complete subjugation of Mohammed Ali's dominions, and war having broken out in Europe between England and France, sent a large force to Madura in the spring of 1757. There Captain Calliaud showed skill and heroism; but he had no battering guns, the place was strong, and before guns arrived, the French marched to Trichinopoly once more, before which they encamped on the 14th of May. The garrison was small, and, besides defending the place, had five hundred French prisoners to guard. Calliaud, active and intelligent, was soon apprised of the danger, and, on the 25th, arrived within nineteen miles of the beleaguered city. For miles his force watched every movement, for the French had denuded all their garrisons, even Pondicherry, in the hope of surprising Trichinopoly. The French had guarded every approach to the city. A plain of seven miles in extent, being an area of rice fields, was deemed impassable, and not guarded. Calliaud advanced towards the city, and made such demonstrations as an officer would have made in order to force one of the strongly-guarded posts; but at night he turned aside, approached the rice swamp, boldly entered it, and brought his tired soldiers safely through, effecting an entrance by daylight into the city. So much was the French general dispirited by this skilful and enterprising movement, that, according to Orme, he the next day retreated to Pondicherry.

Other detachments of the French harassed the country, and burned defenceless towns. The English took reprisals, and sought every opportunity to engage the French in the open field, who, although far the more numerous, declined battle, and maintained a sort of partizan warfare. The English were well handled in the field; but their officers were allowed little discretion by the factors at Madras, and the troops were harassed by orders and counter orders, as the stupidity or fear of the civilians at the presidency dictated.

The year 1757 was one of great activity on the part of the Mahrattas, who demanded



"chout" (tribute) from the Carnatic, and threatened Arcot, so that the nabob had to send his family to Madras for safety. The terrified nabob agreed to pay the chout, and expected the English to find the money out of the unpaid revenues of his own dominions, if they could; but, at all events, he looked to them for the means of redeeming himself from a Mahratta invasion. The English, having no adequate force to bring against the wild horsemen, and unwilling to lose the Carnatic—to the revenues of which, or their share of them, they attributed great prospective value—agreed to pay the stipulated rupees. The brave Calliaud, relieved from the presence of the French at Trichinopoly, again sought to reduce the refractory polygars of Madura and Tinnevely. He besieged Madura, but found it easier to buy his way in than force his way through the breach. This seems, so far as native spirit was concerned, to have quelled revolt in these districts.

The French were now expecting a grand fleet and vast resources of men and arms from France. On the 8th of September, twelve ships arrived at Pondicherry, landed one thousand men, and returned to the Mauritius. This was not the fleet to which the Franco-Indians looked forward, as destined to sweep away all opposition in the Eastern seas, and to land such forces as would speedily subjugate all Southern India. The reinforcements which were landed immediately joined the army in the field, and fort after fort fell to the French, until eight strong places were subdued in the neighbourhood of Chittapet, Trincomalee, and Gingee. The French organized the collectorates of these districts, and received the revenue as if the territory was their own. The Mysoreans invaded the dominions of the nabob, and plundered the country up to the walls of Madura. The English laid an ambush in a narrow pass, and, although the detachment consisted entirely of sepoys, they fell fiercely upon the Mysoreans, inflicting appalling slaughter. This event terminated their incursion. In November the French withdrew their troops into the different forts; but the natives attached to the rival claimants for the nabobship ravaged the entire country—fire, rapine, and blood everywhere indicated the horrors of a war of disputed succession. The year 1757 terminated leaving each party in an expectant attitude; but the French had undoubtedly gained during the struggle in the Carnatic. On the 28th of April the expected French fleet arrived. It consisted of twelve sail of the line, with a portion of the squadron which had the previous year returned from Pondicherry to Mauritius. This expedition left Brest when a fever raged in that port, and

brought the infection on board, so that three hundred men died on the voyage and many arrived sick; a considerable number dying in the roads of Pondicherry, or in the fort.

With this expedition, there was a body of troops not less than thirteen hundred strong. Most of them were Irish, in the French service—the men who, at Fontenoy, snatched victory from the English in the moment when the beaten French were forsaking the field. Probably no page of history records heroism more gallant and romantic than that which relates the courage displayed by the "Irish Brigades" in the French service, when fighting on the field of Fontenoy; and in the records of few battles is homage to the brave so freely accorded by men of all parties as to the gallant men who were the sole victors of that sanguinary conflict. With these troops was the Count de Lally, an Irishman (or, as some affirm, the son of an Irishman), who had on the field of Fontenoy greatly distinguished himself—so much so, that he was promoted to the rank of colonel by the French king at the close of the battle. Dr. Taylor and Mr. Murray describe him as a man of extraordinary prowess. The former says:—"Upon the breaking out of the war between France and England, in 1756, the French ministry resolved to strike an important blow in India. The Count de Lally was appointed to take the chief command. He was descended from one of the Irish families which had been compelled to emigrate at the revolution of 1688, in consequence of having adhered to the cause of the Stuarts; and he was therefore animated by a bitter hatred of British ascendancy, which had crushed both his country and his creed. At the battle of Fontenoy he took several English officers prisoners with his own hand, and was raised to the rank of colonel by King Louis himself on the field of battle. He was accompanied to India by his own Irish regiments, composed of the best troops in the service of France, by fifty of the royal artillery, and by several officers of great distinction."

Dr. Taylor, however he may allow his own national predilections to influence his tone in the above paragraph, does not exaggerate the surprising heroism of the count or of his soldiers. The utmost confidence was placed in both by France; and as Lally was entrusted with all the authority previously allowed to Dupleix, it was supposed that the English would be speedily driven out of their long fostered possessions. Lally was not so fortunate as at Fontenoy; and England, whom in his remorseless bigotry he so bitterly hated, was destined to triumph over him on a distant field, and cause the sun of his glory to



set soon and for ever. Lally was not as skilful as he was brave, although he possessed many of the finest intellectual qualities of a good soldier. He was rash, vehement, impatient, tyrannical; he chafed at obstacles, which might have been patiently surmounted had he preserved his temper. A furious religious animosity towards the English, as the chief Protestant nation, blinded his judgment as to present means and probable results, and threw him into acts of precipitancy from which even his great valour and resources in danger could not extricate him.

The Count de Lally was ordered to attack Fort St. David as soon after his arrival as possible. Before communicating with the land, he caused his ships to take up positions against that place, and at once make hostile demonstrations, while he landed his troops at Pondicherry. Then, with a dispatch previously unknown in Indian warfare, except under Clive, and sometimes under Lawrence, he landed his Irish regiments and an equal number of sepoys, and sent them forward at once against St. David's. The portion of the expedition furnished by the garrison of Pondicherry was badly commanded and badly furnished with material. Indeed, he found the garrison at Pondicherry in a wretched condition. A salute was fired with shotted guns, by which the hull and rigging of one of his ships was damaged. Lally complained bitterly of the ignorance and incompetence of the governor and his council, who could give him no information either concerning the place he was about to attack, or the strength of the English on the coast; neither could they furnish his men with good guides, or even sufficient provisions.

The forces arrived before Fort St. David utterly exhausted, and must have famished of hunger had they not laid the country under contribution. Scarcely had the French expedition approached, when the English fleet was descried from the ships in the road. Mill, quoting Lally himself, and Orme, gives the following account of the futile proceedings of both fleets:—"Mr. Pococke, with the ships of war from Bengal, had arrived at Madras on the 24th of February; on the 24th of the following month a squadron of five ships from Bombay had arrived under Admiral Stevens; and on the 17th of April, the whole sailed to the southward, looking out for the French. Having in ten days worked as high to the windward as the head of Ceylon, they stood in again for the coast, which they made, off Negapatnam, on the 28th, and proceeding along shore, discovered the French fleet, at nine the next morning, riding near Cuddalore. The French imme-

diately weighed, and bore down towards Pondicherry, throwing out signals to recall the two ships which had sailed with Lally; and the English admiral gave the signal for chase. The summons for the two ships not being answered, the French fleet stood out to sea, and formed the line of battle. The French consisted of nine sail, the English only of seven. The battle was indecisive; the loss of a few men, with some damage to the ships, being the only result. Both fleets fell considerably to leeward during the engagement; and the French were six days in working up to the road of Pondicherry, where the troops were landed. Lally himself had some days before proceeded to Fort St. David with the whole force of Pondicherry, and the troops from the fleet were sent after him, as fast as they came on shore."

Meanwhile, matters on shore tried the skill and energy of Lally to the utmost. In order to procure attendants on his army, and as the president and council could not give him a sufficient number of men of low caste, he impressed men of all castes indiscriminately, causing consternation and rage everywhere; he was from that hour hated and distrusted by the natives. Lally became as much an object of hatred to the French as to the natives. He was instructed by the company to regard them rather in the light of unprincipled speculators, so that he arrived with a prejudice against them:—"As the troubles in India have been the source of fortunes, rapid and vast, to a great number of individuals, the same system always reigns at Pondicherry, where those who have not yet made their fortune hope to make it by the same means; and those who have already dissipated it, hope to make it a second time. The Sieur de Lally will have an arduous task to eradicate that spirit of cupidity; but it would be one of the most important services which he could render to the company." Such were the terms of the instructions he received. The want of means at Pondicherry for any military enterprise, and the tardiness with which all material aid was afforded to him for the reduction of Fort St. David, excited his anger to a vehement degree, so that he abused the French civilians in terms which were more appropriate to the lips of a madman than to those of a governor and commander.

Notwithstanding the impediments presented by the officials at Pondicherry, he was able to bring a force before St. David's superior to that of its defenders. The latter consisted of sixteen hundred natives; three hundred and sixty-nine European soldiers, of whom eighty-three were invalids; and two



hundred and fifty sailors unacquainted with military discipline. Lally brought against this garrison two thousand five hundred European soldiers, exclusive of officers, and an equal force of sepoys.\* The place was soon captured; and the conqueror immediately sent an expedition to Devi-Cotah, which the garrison abandoned. On the 7th of June he re-entered Pondicherry, and celebrated a *Te Deum* with great ecclesiastical pomp, for Lally was as ardent in religion as in arms.

The English were astounded at so rapid a series of disasters. They called in all their troops from every department of the presidency to strengthen Madras and Trichinopoly. At this juncture there is every reason to suppose that the English would have lost Madras itself had Lally been supported by the French; but the poverty of the exchequer at Pondicherry, the want of credit with the natives, and the hatred excited among the latter by the new general's tyranny and bigotry, dried up all sources of supply except what came from France; in India the enterprising general lost all hope of material aid, unless it could be supplied by Bussy. Lord Clive, many years after, thus described the condition of affairs at this time:—"M. Lally arrived with a force as threatened not only the destruction of all the settlements there, but of all the East India Company's possessions, and nothing saved Madras from sharing the fate of Fort St. David, at that time, but their want of money, which gave time for strengthening and reinforcing the place."

A letter written by Lally himself from Fort St. David, after the capture, to the president and council of Pondicherry, presents the poverty of French resources, and the disunion between him and the French civilians, in a light sufficiently clear to explain why Madras itself did not fall:—"This letter shall be an eternal secret between you, sir, and me, if you afford me the means of accomplishing my enterprise. I left you 100,000 livres of my own money to aid you in providing the funds which it requires. I found not, upon my arrival, in your purse, and in that of your whole council, the resource of 100 pence. You, as well as they, have refused me the support of your credit. Yet I imagine you are all of you more indebted to the company than I am. If you continue to leave me in want of everything, and exposed to contend with universal disaffection, not only shall I inform the king and the company of the warm zeal which their servants here display for their interest, but I shall take effectual measures for not depending, during the short stay I wish to make in this

\* Orme.

country, on the party spirit and the personal views with which I perceive that every member appears occupied, to the total hazard of the company."

Bussy had in the meantime carried on a series of intrigues in the metropolis of the Deccan, worthy of his own reputation for energy and ability, and of that of his preceptor, Dupleix, for the like qualities. A series of revolutions occurred at the court of the viceroys as rapid as the shocks of an earthquake. Again and again the interests of France and the influence of Bussy were all but destroyed, but from the ruins of each successive catastrophe the genius of Bussy rescued his country's influence, and even increased it by the very means adopted for its destruction. Lally had the infatuation to order Bussy away from the court of the soubahdar, and treated his statements as to the interests involved as pretences. The mind of Lally could not comprehend the subtle, complicated, and extended schemes of Bussy. The latter, on being treated as an impostor, joined the rest of his countrymen in hatred against the hot-headed innovator. Thus situated, the first resolution of the victorious commander was to attack Madras, carry it rapidly at any sacrifice, and obtain therefrom the accumulations of English industry,—those supplies which he so much required. The naval commander was, however, afraid of the English sailors, and would not even sail in the direction of Madras to observe the enemy. He sailed south, under the pretence of intercepting English merchant vessels, but really in the hope of keeping out of harm's way. A large body of troops placed on board were thus kept idle, and drawn away from the French army at St. David's. Had these soldiers been from the Irish instead of the French portion of the force, they would probably, from their devotion to their general, have mutinied against the admiral. The latter succeeded in cruising about in such a way as to avoid the English, and Lally, unable to secure his co-operation, was obliged to adopt another project to gain supplies and extend French influence. The rejected claimant of the throne of Tanjore had been held by the English as a prisoner at Fort St. David, and Lally conceived the idea of using this personage for the purpose of getting money from that country, the reigning rajah of which had formerly given a bond of 5,600,000 rupees to the French, to prevent their attacking his dominions. A demand was made for the money; the rajah did not possess the means of payment, and the French proceeded to dethrone him in favour of the prisoner at Fort St. David,



who would levy it on the inhabitants, with French assistance. On the 18th of June, 1758, Lally marched at the head of his disposable forces against Tanjore. In seven days the army arrived at Carical, the natives everywhere hiding their provisions, and showing the utmost hatred to the general. His own people rendered all support unwillingly; the troops suffered from fatigue and hunger, which the Irish bore even cheerfully, but the French and sepoys were discontented and murmured. A messenger from the Tanjore monarch arrived to treat, but the general would listen to no parley; either the bond must be paid, or he would seize its equivalent, and that of all further expenses incurred. He proceeded to the wealthy town of Nagpore, which he entered, no resistance being offered, but the rich natives had fled, and there was very little property left behind.

He next arrived at Kineloor, where a pagoda stood of great celebrity. He plundered it. Supposing the idols to be gold, he carried them away; they proved to be brass, but the effect upon the natives was the same as if they had been of the precious metal. He dug down to the foundations of the temple, swept all the tanks, and treated the property of the unoffending and defenceless with barbarity. Six Brahmins lingering about the camp, in the hope of obtaining their gods, he seized, denounced as spies, and blew them away from guns.

His track to the capital, where he arrived on the 18th of July, was marked by devastation. The king offered a treaty. Lally's demands, both in their nature and mode, were imprudent, and violated the most obvious religious scruples of the natives. Bigoted himself to the last degree, ready to resent the smallest indignity to his religion with fire and sword, he had no respect or consideration for the religious feelings of others. In civil and religious matters he was alike a tyrant, but he had the faculty, not only of ruling military bodies, but of attaching them to him. This was especially the case with his own Irish soldiers, who followed him with a contempt of danger and a desperate courage which rivalled even his own, although he was reputed to be the bravest man in France.

The bombardment of the rajah's stronghold promptly followed the failure of negotiation which the king renewed under the cannonade, but attempting to trick Lally, as all oriental princes would at all risks, that officer vowed he would send him and his family as slaves to the Mauritius. The rajah, determined to resist, every feeling of his nature having been outraged by successive insults the most galling to a Hindoo imagi-

nation. He appealed to the English. Captain Calliaud had sent him a small detachment of sepoys from Trichinopoly, being afraid if he sent European troops, that the rajah might regard them simply as means of effecting an accommodation, and betray them into the hands of the enemy. Calliaud sent another and stronger detachment. The bombardment continued until the 7th of August, when a breach was effected. At that time Lally had only two days' supply of food in his camp, and hardly one day's supply of ammunition. In that conjuncture of affairs, the English fleet arrived before Carical, the only place from which Lally had obtained supplies. During the siege the two fleets had met, and fought, the English gaining a victory: this Lally also learned, and there now appeared no hope for the French, unless in an immediate assault. Lally called a council of war, two officers were for the assault, of which he was not one; the other thirteen counselled him to raise the siege. They began their retreat next day, but before putting that movement into execution, the besieged garrison sallied out, and partly effected a surprise, placing the French army in imminent danger. As it was necessary for the English fleet to keep on the *qui vive* for the beaten but not extinguished French squadrons, Lally hoped to reach Carical before the English would venture to land a force there. In this he was successful, but when he saw the powerful navy of England riding in the offing, his hope failed, although his courage could not fail, and his rage against the hated English broke forth in torrents of furious and almost frenzied passion.

Lally soon saw that the entire evacuation of Tanjore and its neighbourhood was essential to the safety of the French. Their fleets were fugitive. The Mahrattas, at the instigation of the English, threatened that they would invade the French territory if Lally and his forces did not retire from that of Tanjore; and the civilians of Pondicherry urged his return, as twelve hundred English menaced even the seat of the presidency. Lally had not head for such sudden changes and complicated transactions, and he was bewildered and depressed, while the wants of his brave and patient, but harassed army, were as unprovided for as ever. The movements of the two fleets were uncertain, and their tactics at times unaccountable, both were the victims of the weather. The French had the best ships, the English the best men, and the more nautical skill. Most of the English ships were badly built, and in action the French, knowing that the chances were they would have to retreat, principally



fired into the English rigging to disable pursuit; while the English, firing at the hulls, and sweeping the decks, inflicted more serious and permanent damage, even when flight was not prevented, and killed and disabled a far greater number of men. The proceedings of the different squadrons are differently related by French and English authors, and the contradictions occurring in their relations render it next to impossible to reconcile them. Mill's account is the clearest; he in the main gives the relation of Orme, with such modifications as information subsequently coming to light enabled him to supply. He thus describes what took place at sea:—

“After the first of the naval engagements, the English fleet, before they could anchor, were carried a league to the north of Sadras; the French, which had suffered less in the rigging, and sailed better, anchored fifteen miles to the windward. The English, as soon as possible, weighed again, and after a fruitless endeavour to reach Fort St. David, discovered the French fleet on the 28th of May in the road of Pondicherry. The next day, the French, at the remonstrance of Lally, who sent on board a considerable body of troops, got under sail; but instead of bearing down on the English, unable to advance against the wind, proceeded to Fort St. David, where they arrived on the evening after the surrender. The English sailing badly, fell to leeward as far as Alamparva, where intelligence was received of the loss of the fort. The admiral, therefore, not having water on board for the consumption of five days, made sail, and anchored the next day in the roads of Madras. The fleet had numerous wants; Madras had very scanty means of supply; and nearly eight weeks elapsed before it was again ready for sea. On the 3rd of July three of the company's ships arrived from Bengal, with money, merchandise, and stores, but no troops. The monsoon had obliged them to make the outward passage towards the Acheen, and they came in from the southward. The French admiral, after touching at Fort St. David, had stood to the southward, to cruise off Ceylon; in opposition to remonstrances of Lally, who desired the fleet to co-operate in the destined enterprise against Madras. Lally hastened from Fort St. David to Pondicherry, and summoned a council by whose authority he recalled the fleet. The injunction reached the admiral at Carical on the 16th of June, and he anchored the next day in the road of Pondicherry. Had he continued his destined course to the southward, he could not have missed the three English East Indiamen from Bengal, and by their

capture would have obtained that treasure, the want of which alone disconcerted the scheme of English destruction. On the 25th of July the English fleet were again under sail; and on the 27th appeared before Pondicherry, where the French lay at anchor. They put to sea without delay: but the difficulties of the navigation, and the aims of the commanders, made it the 2nd of August before the fleets encountered off Carical. The French line consisted of eight sail; the English, as before, of seven. The fight lasted scarcely an hour; when three of the French ships, being driven out of the line, the whole bore away, under all the sail they could carry. The English admiral gave chase; but in less than ten minutes the enemy were beyond the distance of certain shot. Toward night the English gave over the pursuit, and came to anchor off Carical. The French steered for Pondicherry, when the admiral declared his intention of returning to Mauritius. Lally sent forward the Count d'Estaing to remonstrate with him on the disgrace of quitting the sea before an inferior enemy, and to urge him to renewed operations. D'Estaing offered to accompany him on board, with any proportion of the troops. Lally himself moved with the army from Carical on the 24th of August, and, having passed the Colaroone, hurried on with a small detachment to Pondicherry, where he arrived on the 28th. He immediately summoned a mixed council of the administration and the army, who joined in a fresh expostulation to the admiral on the necessity of repairing to Madras, where the success of an attack must altogether depend upon the union of the naval and military operations. That commander, representing his ships as in a state of the greatest disablement, and his crews extremely enfeebled and diminished by disease, would yield to no persuasion, and set sail with his whole fleet for Mauritius on the 2nd of September.

“If we trust to the declaration of Lally, his intention of besieging Madras, still more his hopes of taking it, were abandoned from that hour. Before the fleet departed, an expedition against Arcot, with a view to relieve the cruel pressure of those pecuniary wants which the disastrous result of the expeditions to Tanjore had only augmented, was projected and prepared.”

Disconcerted although Lally was, and exhausted as were his means, his expedition against Arcot was conducted with extraordinary energy, dispatch, hardihood, and success. His Irish legion performed prodigies of valour, Lally himself ever foremost in the path of danger. The native enemy melted away



before their furious valour. Fort after fort fell. Every task was executed both by the general and troops with masterly ability, yet strategists affirm that the French commander failed in not cutting off supplies from Madras, which should have been a part of his scheme, and was practicable, as these critics allege. At all events, on the 4th of October, 1758, Lally, "on the terms of a pretended capitulation, amid the thunder of cannon, made his entrance into Arcot."\*

The grand error in Lally's campaign was the neglect of Chingleput, which he might have captured without resistance, so great was the consternation into which the garrison was thrown by his triumphant course. This fortress covered the conveyance of supplies to Madras, and as soon as the English recovered from the temporary panic inspired by Lally's rapid and brilliant career, they strengthened the place in every way their means allowed, and resolved to defend it, if Lally's eyes being opened as to its importance, he should venture to assail it. While the French, or Irish commander, as he may with more strict propriety be called, sped as a fiery meteor over the country, a naval reinforcement arrived from England, conveying eight hundred and fifty royal troops, commanded by Colonel Draper. The brave and wise Caillaud, with his European troops, was recalled from Trichinopoly, and Chingleput was powerfully reinforced.

Lally, who declared that he never lost sight of Chingleput, but had comprised its capture in his plans, wrote from Arcot to Pondicherry for money to pay his troops and find means for carrying them against that place; but the council had no money, and the general was obliged to put his troops into cantonments, and hasten to Pondicherry himself, if possible to set things there in better order. The celebrated Bussy would have been a far more likely man to remove the disorder of that capital; he had just joined his superior as the latter entered Arcot in triumph. Instead of harmonious action between these two important men, crimination and recrimination occurred upon their meeting. Lally, who was a man of honest and transparent mind, accused the wily diplomatist of a tortuous and fraudulent policy dishonouring to France. Bussy, without being more frank than wise, soon caused his master to understand that the lesser magnate considered him impolitic, precipitate, rash, and without a plan which, by its comprehensiveness, consecutiveness, and harmony would bring all his power to bear against the English. The sicur believed that by a bold, daring, onward warfare,

\* Mill, lib. iv. cap. iv. p. 163.

the peninsula might soon be cleared of them; his men, he believed, could do it, if ammunition, food, and the sinews of war were provided. Bussy doubted if the English were a people to be removed in a hurry, as Lally might have known from the experience of his ancestors in Ireland; and Bussy also thought that money and power might both be had, if the means taken to obtain them were well chosen, and used with caution as well as courage. Another general of reputed ability, who had been appointed by Lally governor of Masulipatam, Morasin, also joined the conference. Lally urged these officers to raise money on their personal credit, which the conduct of Lally himself had rendered impossible. Bussy urged the consolidation of conquest, and the exercise of French power at the court of the Deccan, as much more important than the influence of the English with the inferior and subsidiary court of the Carnatic. It was to no purpose that reasons the most convincing were urged for such a course; Lally could see no object but one—the removal of the hated English from India, and war against them everywhere; and there is no doubt his views were popular with his Irish soldiery. The French officers were in favour of the plans of Bussy, and wished him to supersede Lally in rank and authority. The council at Pondicherry declared that they had no means to support the army. The officers urged an attempt to take Madras. Lally had no means for a siege. Count D'Estaing, one of the bravest soldiers in the French army, exclaimed in a council of war: "Better to die under the walls of Madras than of hunger in Pondicherry." Lally himself hoped to pillage the black town, and thus supported, shut up the English in Fort St. George. He advanced his own money, 60,000 rupees, and prevailed upon various Frenchmen in Pondicherry to advance more, which barely exceeded half of his own contributions. With these means he equipped a little army of about seven thousand men, of whom about two thousand seven hundred were French and Irish, and proceeded against Madras. He was ready to march by the first week in November, but the weather detained him six weeks, and his resources were being rapidly consumed, and he was then reduced to barely a week's supply.

The English prepared themselves against the danger which impended. Admiral Pococke landed his marines at Madras. A body of native cavalry, and the sepoys who had been part of the garrison of Trichinopoly, were posted so as to command the line of the French convoys. Lawrence, who had before been a victor so often, commanded the army,



which encamped on an elevated spot near the city. Governor Pigot commanded the fort, a man unsuitable for any military purpose, although shrewd, sensible, and with much capacity for business. The military in the fort consisted of seventeen hundred and fifty-eight Europeans, two thousand two hundred and twenty sepoy, and two hundred of the nabob's horsemen, who were of little value. There were one hundred and fifty Europeans, who acted as civil auxiliaries.

On the 12th of December Lally attacked Lawrence's outposts, who fought and fell back. Lally pressed upon him with impetuosity, and Lawrence sought shelter in the fort. The count reconnoitred all day on the 13th. On the 14th he realized his purpose of capturing the black town, which was pillaged. The Irish soldiery became intoxicated. The English, acquainted with the fact, sallied out to the number of six hundred men, who were selected for their bravery and efficiency. These troops fell upon the revellers, and slew many; but although most were drunk, and all in great disorder, they proved much more formidable enemies than their French colleagues; they did not give way, but fought in scattered groups with undaunted bravery and determination, until two hundred of the English, who also fought with obstinate valour, lay dead in the streets. The remainder retreated before Lally's soldiers could form. Bussy, instead of intercepting the fugitives, refused to act, or allow his officers to act, on the ground that he was without orders and without cannon,—an absurd pretext, for the English were driven back without cannon and without orders, and Bussy could have intercepted them had he as much spirit as his officers. Probably the want of cordiality between him and Lally accounted for it, and it may be that the feeling extended to Bussy's followers; for on Aughrim, Fontenoy, and other fields, where they fought side by side, the French evinced much jealousy of their Irish auxiliaries.

Lally having obtained money from some merchants who were resident in the black town, opened his batteries, as he himself alleged afterwards, without hope of capture, but with the intention to bombard. While the count was thus proceeding a million of livres arrived at Pondicherry, and with the funds thus placed at his disposal, he made regular siege, with the hope of subduing the fort before the English fleet, expected back in January, should arrive. With disadvantages such as would have deterred any other man then living, unless Clive, and with nothing to encourage him but the heroism and noble devotion of his own Irish soldiers, and a few of the common soldiers

among the French and the sepoy, this dauntless man persevered. Mill did him and his poor soldiers no more than justice when he wrote the following account, which unites a fulness and a brevity not to be met with in any other record of these transactions:—  
“With only two engineers, and three artillery officers, excepting the few who belonged to the company, all deficient both in knowledge and enterprise; with officers in general dissatisfied and ill-disposed, with only the common men on whom he could depend, and of whose alacrity he never had reason to complain, he carried on the siege with a vigour and activity which commanded the respect even of the besieged, though they were little acquainted with the difficulties under which he toiled. By means of the supplies which had plentifully arrived from Bengal, and the time which the presidency had enjoyed to make preparation for siege, the English were supplied with an abundance both of money and of stores. The resolution to defend themselves to the utmost extremity, which has seldom been shared more universally and cordially by any body of men, inspired them with incessant vigilance and activity. The industry of the enemy was perpetually counteracted by a similar industry on the part of their opponents. No sooner had those without erected a work than the most active, and enterprising, and often skilful exertions were made from within to destroy it. Whatever ingenuity the enemy employed in devising measures of attack was speedily discovered by the keen and watchful eyes of the defenders. A breach, in spite of all those exertions, was, however, effected; and the mind of Lally was intensely engaged with preparations for the assault; when he found the officers of his army altogether indisposed to second his ardour. Mr. Orme declares his opinion that their objections were founded on real and prudential considerations, and that an attempt to storm the place would have been attended with repulse and disaster. Lally, however, says that the most odious intrigues were carried on in the army, and groundless apprehensions were propagated, to shake the resolution of the soldiers, and prevent the execution of the plan: that the situation of the general was thus rendered critical in the highest degree, and the chance of success exceedingly diminished; yet he still adhered to his design, and only waited for the setting of the moon, which in India sheds a light not much feebler than that of a winter sun, on the very day on which an English fleet of six sail arrived at Madras. The fleet under Admiral Pococke, which had left Madras on the 11th of October, had arrived at Bombay on the 10th of Decem-



ber, where they found six of the company's ships, and two ships of the line, with six hundred of the king's troops on board. On the 31st of December the company's ships, with all the troops, sailed from Bombay, under the convoy of two frigates, and arrived on the 16th of February, at a critical moment, at Madras. 'Words,' says Lally, 'are inadequate to express the effect which the appearance of them produced. The officer who commanded in the trenches deemed it even inexpedient to wait for the landing of the enemy, and two hours before receiving orders retired from his post.' Lally was now constrained to abandon the siege. The officers and soldiers had been on no more than half pay during the first six weeks of the expedition, and entirely destitute of pay during the remaining three. The expenses of the siege and the half pay had consumed, during the first month, the million livres which had arrived from the islands. The officers were on the allowance of the soldiers. The subsistence of the army for the last fifteen days had depended almost entirely upon some rice and butter, captured in two small vessels from Bengal. A very small quantity of gunpowder remained in the camp; and not a larger at Pondicherry. The bombs were wholly consumed three weeks before. The sepoys deserted for want of pay, and the European cavalry threatened every hour to go over to the enemy."

It is probable that but for the personal attachment of his own soldiers of the Irish brigade the French would have seized Lally, and given Bussy the command. On the night of the 17th the army broke up from before Madras and made good their retreat. The English seem to have been so awed by the bravery and military capacity of Lally, and a portion of his troops, that they instituted no pursuit. Considering the superior force, equipment, and resources of the English at Madras when the siege was raised, it was much to their dishonour that a hot and unrelenting pursuit was not adopted. The tidings of Lally's misfortunes at Madras arrived in Pondicherry before him, and were hailed with transports of joy, alike by French and natives, so completely had the bigotry and self-will of the governor counteracted the bravery, talent, and glory of the soldier. When he arrived at Pondicherry, if the joy at his ill success were less openly expressed, it was not less hearty.

Mohammed Ali, the actual nabob of the Carnatic, the *protégé* of the English, had proved himself a costly ally. He had, however, been true to English interests, and their honour and policy was to support him. His two brothers, who had been instigated by the

French, and who had so often sought French help, now, in the hour of adversity, betrayed them. One of the brothers actually assassinated all the French in his service, except a single officer, justifying the apprehensions entertained by Calliaud, recorded in a former page, when urged to send British troops to the assistance of the nabob himself. The native princes were entirely without faith, honour, or principle, and no confidence could be reposed in them, however gratitude or oaths might be expected to bind them to their engagements, or even to the observance of hospitality, justice, and mercy. The English were most anxious to recover the province, and prepared an expedition, but their funds had been so heavily drawn upon, that they were unable to take the field until the 6th of March, when a force, consisting of 1156 Europeans, 1570 sepoys, 1120 collierees (regular troops), and 1956 horse, was fully equipped for a campaign.

Besides this force, a native chief with a body of sepoys was sent to the countries of Tinnevely and Madura. When the troops had been withdrawn for the defence of Madras, Madura and Palam Cotah were attacked by the native chiefs; but the sepoys, who constituted the garrison, remained faithful, and drove them off.

When the army of Lally retreated from Madras, only a portion entered Pondicherry; another division marched to Congeveram, where the two armies remained in hostile array for three weeks, neither feeling strong enough to act upon the offensive. The English drew off to Wandiwash, took the town, and were preparing to open trenches against the fort, when the French moved from Congeveram to its relief. This was the expectation of the English, and, acting boldly and promptly upon the design previously formed, they turned, by a forced march reached Congeveram, assaulted and captured it. The two armies watched one another, without giving battle, until the 28th of May, when both went into cantonments.

While these events were passing, the fleets were occupied by measures of usefulness. On the 29th of April, Admiral Pococke arrived from the western coast of India, and cruised about, watching for French ships. About a month after the armies went into cantonments the company's usual ships arrived at Madras, and brought one hundred soldiers for the service of the country, and announced that royal troops, in considerable numbers, might soon be expected. At the same time, it was announced that no treasure would arrive until 1760, tidings which dispirited the council, but which they did not then permit to transpire beyond the council chamber. In another



month five ships arrived at Negapatnam with a portion of the expected troops, and, having landed stores and munitions, sailed for Madras.

On the 20th of August the French squadron sailed for the neighbourhood of Trincomalee, in the Island of Ceylon, where the fleet was reinforced by three new ships from France. On the 10th of September the weather allowed the two navies to operate, and the English, having the wind, came down abreast, while the French lay-to in line of battle. The superiority of the French fleet was very great: they had eleven sail of the line and three frigates. The English had but nine sail of the line, one frigate, a fire-ship, and two of the company's traders. The superiority in guns on the part of the French was one hundred and seventy-four. The battle lasted but two hours, when the French line was broken, and made all sail out of the engagement. As usual, the English had suffered chiefly in the rigging, and could not follow. A pursuit of ten minutes proved that if the English had the best of the battle, the French were more skilful in making out of it. The loss of men was about equal; but the French ships were severely hulled, but suffered little in the rigging. The English next day entered the port of Negapatnam: the French, in four days, reached Pondicherry. Great was the distress of the people there when a beaten fleet sought shelter, which they hoped would bring them the means of victory and large supplies. The disappointment and discontent spread wherever the French troops were quartered. The Irish brigade had received no pay for a long time—they had “borne the burning and heat of the day”—they had accomplished more in battle than the whole of the French troops besides—they alone had encountered with success the English; yet the limited funds of the presidency had been employed in recruiting and drilling sepoys, who ran away, and in supporting the civilians, French officers, and French troops, while Lally's own regiment was, like Lally himself, treated with something like hostility. In the hour of danger they were relied upon, and French compliment was lavished, to stimulate them, while, as at Madras, the toil of labour and battle was borne by them, and they were left to starve, unable to obtain either rations or their pay to procure them. Their long-enduring patience at last gave way: they mutinied, and the whole French army became disorganized. This corps had been regarded in India with the prestige it had acquired in France, and looked up to not only as the most chivalrous in battle, but the best disciplined; now their disobedience shook the loyalty of

every other corps.\* But, although Lally's regiment mutinied under the pressure of hunger, and because they believed that their general and themselves were the objects of an invidious feeling, this did not hinder their usual aptitude in arms, as they soon proved in an action of great importance at Wandiwash.

Coote had not yet arrived, and the officer who was next in command was Major Brereton. He was extremely solicitous to perform some brilliant deed, while the chance of commanding in chief remained with him. He accordingly induced the council of Madras to consent to his leading a force against Wandiwash. The whole army accordingly marched from Congeveram on the 26th of September. The two forces now in front of one another were very formidable, comprising the chief strength of each, but the English were far superior in *materiel* and equipment, while they were also well supplied with provisions. The French were deficient in every requisite. The English attacked the place on the night of the 29th, they came on with great gallantry, and they were received with equal spirit. It does not appear that the native auxiliaries on either side were of much use. The English passed through a terrible fire, and with the most audacious courage bore down all opposition; it so happened that at Wandiwash, as at Madras, they were once more brought into fierce conflict with their own fellow-subjects, who constituted Lally's corps, a sanguinary conflict ensued, and the English sustained a terrible defeat, leaving more than two hundred men dead, or in the hands of the victors. The repulse they experienced seems to have much injured the *morale* of the force. Mr. Mill relates the following anecdote illustrative of the fact:—“In this action a detachment of grenadiers were very expeditiously quitting the vicinity of danger; when their officer, instead of calling after them, an imprudence which would, in all probability, have converted their retreat into a flight, ran till he got before them, and then, turning suddenly round, said, ‘Halt,’ as giving the ordinary word of command. The habit of discipline prevailed. The men stopped, formed according to orders, and marched back into the scene of action. But this success of the French, however brilliant,

\* The first troops of the brigade were generally regarded in France as much better on the field of battle than anywhere else, and soon after they gained for France the far-famed field of Fontenoy, many complaints were urged as to their free way of living in quarters and their addiction to duels. The king pointed out the fact of these complaints to their general, exclaiming, “My Irish troops give me more trouble than all the rest of my army.” “Sire,” was the gallant and witty reply, “your majesty's enemies say the same thing.”



neither clothed the men nor supplied them with provisions."

The state of affairs which ensued upon the French victory of Wandiwash was, on the whole, unfavourable to France. A signal victory was gained without producing any moral influence among natives in favour of the French, for it was mainly to the valour of Lally's corps that the triumph was attributable, and the natives could not see any difference between Irishmen and Englishmen, and supposed that Lally's people were influenced by no principle in serving the French, but were mercenary soldiers who ought to have been on the other side. The natives did not fail to observe that, whenever the French and English met, unless the soldiers of Lally bore the brunt of the battle, the French were beaten; so that the English got the moral credit of the heroism of Lally's soldiers, and although they were defeated, still it was a battle lost to their own countrymen, and in the opinion of the natives redounded to English honour. The feeling became general throughout the Carnatic, and in other portions of the Deccan was rapidly making progress, that the French, however invincible to natives, were not as good soldiers as the British, and must finally give place to them. In various ways such a feeling proved disadvantageous to the French, depriving them of native support. If the French lost a battle the English of course got the glory; if the French won one where the Irish brigade formed part of their army, the victory was attributed to the brigade, and the British had the glory again, even although they experienced repulse. The French were in a false position, and lost moral power day by day.

The removal of Bussy from the court of the Deccan left the French protégé, the viceroi, unable to cope with his ambitious rivals. A revolution broke out, and French influence then, deprived of the expert diplomacy of Bussy, melted away.

The general state of affairs at this juncture, as it affected the French favourably and unfavourably, is voluminously presented by the great English historian of the time, Orme, and by Lally after his return to France. Mr. Mill collated these accounts, and thus gives the result:—"Neither the English nor the French had ever been able to draw from the districts which they held in the country, sufficient funds to defray the expense of the troops employed in conquering and defending them. A considerable portion of those districts, which the French had been able to seize upon the arrival of Lally, the English had again recovered. The government of Pondicherry, left almost wholly destitute of

supplies from Europe, was utterly exhausted, first, by the long and desperate struggle in which they had been engaged; and secondly (for the truth must not be disguised, though the complaints of Lally have long been treated with ridicule), by the misapplication of the public funds: a calamity of which the violent passion of individuals for private wealth was a copious and perennial fountain. Lally had, from his first arrival, been struggling on the borders of despair, with wants which it was altogether out of his power to supply. The English had received, or were about to receive, the most important accession to their power. And nothing but the fleet, which had now arrived, and the supplies which it might have brought, could enable him much longer to contend with the difficulties which environed him.

"M. d'Aché had brought, for the use of the colony, £16,000 in dollars, with a quantity of diamonds, valued at £17,000, which had been taken in an English East Indiaman; and, having landed these effects, together with one hundred and eighty men, he declared his resolution of sailing again immediately for the islands. Nothing could exceed the surprise and consternation of the colony upon this unexpected and alarming intelligence. Even those who were the most indifferent to the success of affairs, when the reputation of Lally and the interest of their country alone were at stake, now began to tremble, when the very existence of the colony, and their interests along with it, were threatened with inevitable destruction. All the principal inhabitants, civil and military, assembled at the governor's house, and formed themselves into a national council. A vehement protest was signed against the departure of the fleet. But the resolution of the admiral was inflexible; and he could only be induced to leave four hundred Caffres, who served in the fleet, and five hundred Europeans, partly marines and partly sailors.

"At the same time the departure of Bussy had been attended, in the dominions of the soubahdar, with a rapid succession of events, ruinous to the interests of the French. An expedition from Bengal, fitted out by the English against the northern Circars, those important districts of which Bussy had obtained the dominion from Salabat Jung, had been attended with the most brilliant success; had not only driven the French entirely out of the country, but had compelled the soubahdar to solicit a connection with the English."

Bussy, however, continued to open communications with the revolutionists of the Deccan; and, with a perfidy only to be surpassed by Dupleix, finding his former pro-



tégé the weaker, entreated the count to side with the revolvers. Lally was a straightforward, honest man, who detested Bussy and his intrigues, and liked to adjust political differences by honest treaty, or downright hard fighting. He did not comprehend the arguments of his lieutenant, admitted that he had no knowledge of the politics of the Deccan, but began to see the importance in relation to the English of holding power with the viceroy, to whom the nabob of the Carnatic, the protégé of the English, owed allegiance. Lally permitted his minister to act as he pleased, and his first act was to declare Salabat Jung Nabob of the Carnatic. This pretender had raised an army, and had the support of the revolutionary power in the Deccan. The sieur confided to Bussy a body of troops to march to the assistance of the pretender, then directing his course upon Vellore. Bussy arrived at Wandiwash the day after the English suffered the reverse at that place, to take thence a portion of the troops upon his new enterprise. The French army, which was suffering extreme privations, at once burst into general mutiny. They believed that the admiral had left plenty of money at Pondicherry, and that the civilians had squandered it. The civilians did squander from time to time very much, and the chief cause of their hatred to Lally was his incorruptibleness, and determination to check their corruption. On the 16th of October the officers were deprived of all authority. Bussy had by that time, through his extraordinary address, led his division to Arcot, when hearing of the still further proceedings of the mutinous army which he had left behind, he halted. The French soldiers were, however, pacified by six months' pay, and a general amnesty. But the pretender to the nabobship had exhausted his resources, was observed by an English corps, and was solicited to give up his alliance with Bussy, by Nizam Ali, the chief of the successful revolutionary party in the Deccan, and then the ostensible viceroy. The negotiation between the pretender to the Carnatic and Bussy was broken off. The latter continued somehow to support his troops, and to increase his division by four hundred superior horsemen of the Deccan. Lally, no longer able to feed his army, was obliged to separate it into two divisions, and send each in a different direction to collect the rents, and assert generally the sovereignty of those districts. This was perilous in the presence of so great a force as the English now possessed, but all parties agreed that there was nothing else which could be done, and preserve the soldiers alive.

On the 20th of November the division which took the southern direction seized upon

the island of Seringham, the garrison of Trichinopoly being too weak to offer resistance. Unfortunately for Lally, Colonel Coote, with the remainder of his force, had landed a few weeks before, and, on the 21st of November, reached Congeveram, where the English troops were cantoned. He pretended to concentrate his attention on Arcot, and deceived the French, threw them off their guard at Wandiwash, and then, suddenly assaulting that place, carried it on the 29th. This gallant *coup* of Coote compelled Lally to abandon Seringham for the defence of Arcot. He was joined by Bussy, with the force at the head of which he had been fruitlessly wandering about, for the first time in his Indian experience. Bussy recommended a cunning and effectual course of strategy to his chief—that of using his superiority of cavalry to act upon the English communications. Lally found that the temper of his Irish soldiers would not be satisfied with expeditions which only harassed the enemy, and that some bold exploit—some obvious and tangible advantage, was necessary to satisfy their daring enterprise and their protracted disappointments. Bussy's plan was the best in itself, but was unsuited to the condition of the troops. The count, anxious to secure food and ammunition, by clever stratagem diverted the attention of the English, and seized Congeveram, where he found nothing of importance. The English were fed by paying ready money daily at a high rate to the country people, who, finding them to be good customers, provided them with supplies; but Bussy's Mahratta horsemen often interfered with these operations, to the injury and embarrassment of the British. Lally next attempted the recapture of Wandiwash. Surprise was impossible: he laid siege to the place; but his genius was baffled by the professional etiquette of the engineers, who insisted upon carrying on the siege according to established rules, instead of obeying the orders of their chief, whose keen military eye saw that such rules were unnecessary in the case. Before he could do anything, a superior English army came to raise the siege. Bussy advised his superior officer to resort to the stratagem of cutting off the English supplies; but Lally, scorning to retreat, prepared to give battle to the approaching foe. The English manœuvred admirably, and formed their line with one wing in communication with the fort, and resting upon it so as to be covered by its fire. The European force of the French was superior to that of the English, being 2250 against 1900. The native force of the British was the stronger, being 2100 sepoy and 1250 cavalry against 1300 sepoy. The Mahratta horse in the French service would



not approach the field within several miles. The English had twenty-six field pieces, which were admirably officered and manned. Lally's engineers and artillery were inferior: his sole reliance was upon his Irish infantry; although a portion of his French force were cavalry, and from them he also expected some service. These cavalry were the first troops tested, and they behaved basely. The British advanced; and Lally, believing their left wing wavered from the fire of his artillery, which there is good reason for believing was an error, bravely put himself at the head of his horsemen, and ordered a charge; but neither men nor officers would follow him. He suspended the commanding officer, and ordered the next in seniority to take the command: he refused to obey. Lally addressed the men, appealing to their patriotism and courage. A junior officer cried out that it was shame to desert the general in the midst of battle, and this produced the effect. The general led them, however, but a short distance when some artillery fire beginning to take effect, the whole turned and fled, and the intrepid soldier stood alone to dare for France what Frenchmen were unwilling to brave. Lally then brought up his French infantry, who, wretchedly supported by the artillery, and altogether deserted by the cavalry, European and native, saw the hopelessness of success, and fired at random. The English, who perfectly obeyed their orders, were commanded not to fire a shot, but advance steadily, which they did, as if a mass moved by a single will. The infantry on their extreme right being Lally's own, threw themselves into column, and rushed madly forward to meet the English, who were ordered to reserve their fire until the enemy was close. The English receiving the columns in line, the battle assumed a form similar to that of so many of the Duke of Wellington's in recent years: as he said of Waterloo, in his letter to Marshal Beresford—"They came on in the old way, and were beaten off in the old way." The fire of the British line fell with deadly certainty upon the front and flank of their opponents, tearing open the column in a manner the most sanguinary and terrible. Yet these dauntless men, true to Lally when all else forsook him, broke through this terrific fire, and, charging with the bayonet, in the same spirit as the English afterwards became accustomed to do, broke the British line, and, as Mill describes it, "bore down what was opposed to it." Its victory, won so well—and never was victory won more bravely—was of short duration. The French cavalry had galloped off the field; the native cavalry, their allies, had not appeared upon it; the sepoy fired irregularly and at a distance: the handful of heroes of Lally's own

corps was left to do battle with the British army. The English infantry, cavalry, and artillery fell upon their unprotected flanks: yet still they fought until the field was ensanguined with their blood, and the tired remnant were swept before the repeated charges of overwhelming numbers, as the monsoon scatters the surges of the sea. Bussy put himself at the head of the French infantry, and led them to a bayonet charge. His horse was pierced by a British bayonet, and his soldiers forsook him on the field, leaving him a prisoner in the hands of the English. Lally ordered the sepoy to charge: they would not, and soon turned from the field. The Irish suffered dreadfully, and were left alone to combat and to die, winning for themselves an honour scarcely inferior to that of Fontenoy, even in defeat. The sieur acted the part of a skilful general in bringing his beaten army off the field; and the French cavalry, who behaved so cowardly, with the brave remnant of Lally's own regiment, so gallantly covered the retreat, that the army, demoralized although it was, was preserved from annihilation. He even halted at a short distance, the native cavalry in the English service not daring to pursue; and the British infantry, having become exhausted in the conflict, were unequal to a task with which the sepoy could not be entrusted. Lally awaited the junction of his detachment at Wandiwash, and carried off his wounded and his light baggage in the face of his enemy. He then proceeded to Chittapet, and thence to Gingee.

Coote was a brave, cool, and active officer. He did not allow the war to slumber, and sent forward a detachment for the reduction of Arcot. Hearing that the French fort of Chittapet was almost defenceless, Coote determined to attempt its reduction before besieging Arcot. Both forts were reduced with trifling loss and labour, the enemy offering but a feeble resistance.

Lally withdrew his troops from Gingee to Vellore, lest the English should intercept his communications with Pondicherry, and in order to protect the districts from which he had then any chance of obtaining provisions. Finding that all his attempts to obtain any pecuniary assistance from Pondicherry, or supplies of any kind were unavailing, he proceeded to that place, and stormed with his usual unrestrained passion against the delinquents whom he accused of embezzling the property of the company, and betraying their country. They in return accused him of folly, rashness, incompetency, and to these charges, which might have had some show of reason, except as to any impeachment of incompetency in the field, they added the absurd taunt of cowardice. The result of these



recriminations was to paralyse still further all hope of conducting the war against the English successfully.

The destitution and disorganization of the French army were now fearfully increased, and had the English marched at once boldly upon Pondicherry, it must have fallen; but they were deficient in information, and believing that the resources of the French at Pondicherry were ample, and that in other directions also they exceeded the reality, the policy was adopted of attacking the various minor places in detail, and then of gradually closing upon Pondicherry, and reducing it by blockade. This plan was acted upon with slow, but ultimate success. It would be tedious to recount the various actions which took place, or to give an account of the relative consequence of the successes which the English obtained. M. Auber\* gives the following correct summary, which is, although closely condensed, sufficiently ample for the reader's purpose, possessing the exactness which that writer's peculiar opportunities enabled him to observe:—"The army, after the surrender of Arcot, moved towards Pondicherry, to cut off supplies, while Admiral Cornish blockaded it by sea. The district of Trincomalee was reduced by Captain Smith. On the 5th of March, Permacoil surrendered to Colonel Coote, Carical to Colonel Monson and Admiral Cornish on the 5th of April, and Chellumbrum to Colonel Monson on the 12th. On the same day Colonel Coote took Waldour, where the camp was formed previously to operations against Pondicherry; for which purpose a large supply of gunpowder had been sent from Bengal and Bombay, accompanied by three companies of the king's artillery from the latter presidency. The Mahrattas had gained a considerable victory over Salabat Jung, who ceded to them districts of the value of sixty lacs of rupees, and the fort of Dowlatabad, at that time the strongest in the country. M. Bussy and other French prisoners on parole, at Pondicherry, were ordered to Madras, as several of them had borne arms by order of M. Lally. Considerable apprehension being entertained that the Mahrattas would enter the province and demand the *chout*, and, if joined by the Mysoreans and the French, that they would impede the designs against Pondicherry, a member of the council was deputed, for the purpose of inducing them to refrain from advancing towards the Carnatic. In the month of September, the president, Governor Pigot, accompanied by Colonel Coote, visited Admiral Stevens on board the *Norfolk*, and, after much solicitation, ob-

tained his consent to the marines of the squadron being landed, to aid the troops in preventing supplies being thrown into Pondicherry. During the preparation for attacking Ariancopang, orders were received from Bengal for divesting Colonel Coote of the command, and placing it in the hands of Colonel Monson. The latter officer, in an attack on the enemy's outposts, having had both the bones of his leg broken by a shot, recommended that Colonel Coote should again receive the command. It was some days, however, before Coote would consent to return to the camp, having made preparations to proceed to Bengal. The French blew up Ariancopang, and retreated to Pondicherry. The marines being re-embarked by the desire of Admiral Stevens, he sailed in October with the greater part of his fleet to Trincomalee, leaving five of his ships to prevent the enemy affording aid by sea. The king (as he was then styled) of Mysore having supported the French, a diversion was made into his country, and the fort of Caroor taken by Captain Smith. It was supposed to have been the first instance of any European troops having advanced so far inland westward. The king subsequently addressed letters of friendship to the president, and the nabob of the Carnatic, stating that it was his prime-minister, Hyder Naigue, who had rebelled against him, and sent his troops to assist the French. This appears to have been the first mention of Hyder, who became so formidable an enemy to the company, both in his own person and that of his adopted successor."

By the 1st of May, 1760, the French had lost all their possessions in the Carnatic, except the strong fort of Gingee, and the fort commanding an important pass called Jhiager, and were shut up in Pondicherry, blockaded by land and sea.

Lally had, however, continued to negotiate with the Mysoreans, and they consented to afford him food, munitions of war, and a body of three thousand horse and five hundred infantry. They falsified all his expectations. They, indeed, advanced their troops, defeating an English detachment in their progress, and encamped near Pondicherry, but finding the affairs of the French desperate, they decamped in the night, after lingering about the place for a month. They were probably influenced by the arrival of six of the company's ships at Madras, with royal troops to the number of six hundred. This was the 2nd of August, Pondicherry having been three months blockaded, and no impression made upon the place. A month later (September 2), several other ships of the company arrived, three ships of war, and a wing of a

\* *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 102.



Highland regiment. The reinforcements of troops had now been considerable, and the fleet consisted of nineteen sail of the line, with one or two frigates, and several lesser ships, besides several heavily armed ships of the company:—"Lally had now, and it is no ordinary praise, during almost eight months since the total discomfiture of his army at Wandiwash, imposed upon the English so much respect as deterred them from the siege of Pondicherry; and, notwithstanding the desperate state of his resources, found means to supply the fort, which had been totally destitute of provisions, with a stock sufficient to maintain the garrison for several months. And he still resolved to strike a blow which might impress them with an opinion that he was capable of offensive operations of no inconsiderable magnitude. He formed a plan, which has been allowed to indicate both judgment and sagacity, for attacking the English camp by surprise in four places on the night of the 4th of September. But one of the four divisions, into which his army was formed for the execution of the enterprise, fell behind its time, and disconcerted the operations of the remainder."\*

Early in December the English converted the blockade into a close siege, erecting batteries which fired upon the place, from the end of the first week to the 30th; on that day a tempest of extraordinary violence stranded three of the English ships in the road, and injured almost all the others. The camp also suffered damage, the tents of the soldiers being torn up and driven away, and the ground flooded. It was a storm, which in its intensity and the character of its effects, bore a close resemblance to that which smote the besieging fleets and armies before Sebastopol on the memorable night of the 14th of November, 1854. As in the latter case, so in the former, the storm and deluge only delayed the siege, the English repaired the damages, and pressed on the works throughout the first days of January. About the 12th of the month, Lally, exhausted with anxiety and fatigue, became ill, and the management of affairs devolved upon the council, which was torn with dissensions. Whatever Lally ordered was disobeyed. The provisions which that general had, with so much talent, energy, and self-sacrifice, laid in, were squandered. Lally, perceiving their total want of competency and principle, ordered them to make terms with the besiegers; they deceived him, and went on squandering the means of defence. In the evening of the

14th, a commissioner from Lally, and a deputation from the council, entered the English camp. Lally claimed the benefit of a cartel which had been concluded between the two crowns, and which, the deputation from the council urged, rendered it impossible to propose a capitulation. Coote, who commanded the British, alleging that a dispute being still open as to the meaning and extent of the cartel, he could not recognise it, and would accept nothing but an unconditional surrender. There remained nothing for the French but immediate surrender; they had only two days' provision left, and no proper material of war to resist a siege. The council of Madras levelled the town and fort; all the French were borne away prisoners. Dupleix had boasted that he would serve Madras so, and the council of the presidency determined to make the King of France feel that the retribution was as complete as it was deserved. Theagar and Gingee surrendered almost without resistance, completing the English conquest of the Carnatic.

In the meantime important transactions between the French and English had occurred elsewhere, the result of which, taken with the events in the Carnatic, was that the French had lost all their possessions in India when Gingee surrendered.

The fate of Lally was sorrowful: when liberated by the English and restored to France, he was cast into the Bastille, thence he was taken to a common prison, accused of high treason, dragged through the streets of Paris in a dung-cart, and then executed,—forming one of the most disgraceful pages of French history. Never was a man more true to France, more loyal to her king, more zealous or honest in the public service of any country. His vices were a hasty temper, a despotic will, religious bigotry, and a hatred to the English, both national and religious, which amounted almost to monomania. His services to France were great; his requital murder, as Orme, the English historian, designated his execution—"a murder committed with the sword of justice:" he might have more properly said, with the sword of law. The French monarch and ministry, anxious to appease the hostility which rose around them, sought and found a noble victim. Lally was subsequently amply avenged. His son was the Lally Tollandal whose eloquence in the constituent assembly contributed so much to destroy the bigoted, tyrannical, sanguinary, and treacherous monarchy of the Bourbons. Thus national, like individual retribution, forms a striking feature in the moral government of the all-wise and just God, whose long suffering and patience hinder not, but illustrate and

\* *History of British India.* By James Mill, Esq., book iv. chap. iv. p. 182.



enforce, the impartial and sure justice of His administration.

The English were now masters of the Carnatic, over which they ruled through their nominee, Mohammed Ali, who had probably the most equitable claim to the title of nabob. The soubahdar of the Deccan, whom the English called viceroy or nizam, professed to be their ally; and although the nabob of the Carnatic was tributary to him, the latter was left wholly under the direction and control of the English. This was the first *great* war in which the English were engaged in India, and was one so bloody, protracted, and involving such lasting consequences, as to deserve an extended narrative.

It required, however, a few years to consolidate the government of the Carnatic; and during that process fresh events tended to alter its relations to surrounding territory, and to give the English a still wider preponderance in Southern India, through the necessary effects and sequences of the war in the Carnatic, which they had so successfully waged. The nabob was still disturbed by refractory polygars, and at the same time by intrigues conducted from Mysore by Hyder, who, early in 1766, was in ostensible revolt against his sovereign.\* The English were much occupied in negotiations with the court of the Deccan, and with an expedition to Manilla, which left Madras on the 29th of July, 1762; but still they gave attention to the nabob's affairs, mediated between him and the Mysoreans, and aided in subduing the polygars. At the end of the year 1761 Vellore surrendered to the nabob, which was a source to him of great satisfaction; and during 1762 the most rebellious and powerful of the polygars made submission.

The various parties contending in the Deccan, especially that of Salabat Jung, sought English aid soon after the surrender of the French, offering for it large territorial concessions, which were refused, the council informing the directors, "we are not anxious to grasp more than can be held,"—which showed as much policy as moderation.

In 1764 tidings of peace in Europe between England and France arrived in Madras. The council were as much averse to French settlements in India as ever; alleging, in their correspondence with the directors, that the French could never support settlements by trade; that in order to obtain means to keep up troops and grand establishments, they would be sure to seek territory by means involving all around them in frequent recourse to arms. Governor Pigot had left

for England at the latter end of the previous year; these views he affirmed in London. The successor of Mr. Pigot was of the same mind. French settlements and peace were regarded by the English as not likely to exist long in India together.

In the early part of 1763 the fort of Madura was invested by the British; in October it surrendered to Major Campbell. By this conquest the nabob was enabled to occupy a strong post in the midst of a large district ruled by insurrectionary polygars. The most important consequence of the conquest of the Carnatic was the acquisition by the English of the Northern Circars. This was, however, not wholly the result of the expulsion of the French from the Carnatic, although chiefly so: the events in Bengal which were occurring at the same time, contributed their quota to the influences which enabled the English to become masters of territory so desirable.

By the treaty of peace Pondicherry was restored to the French; and M. Law, who had formerly distinguished himself as an opponent of the English, had returned to Pondicherry under that treaty. The English at Madras became alarmed lest he should lay claim to the Northern Circars, which had been conceded to the French in 1657. The territory was of great extent and importance, commanding a vast range on the Coromandel coast, fertile in a considerable portion of its area, and occupied by an industrious population. The French were no sooner settled in Pondicherry than disputes were raised about the treaty between England and France, and between France and the soubahdar in the Deccan, on the ground of which the French might claim it. The English having expelled the French during the late war, were disposed to stretch to the utmost the rights of their nominee, the Nabob of the Carnatic. The French assumed a tone irritating, consequential, and assuming; they wrote and talked as if they felt it to be their right and duty to resume their old authority—to deprive them of which the war had been waged so fiercely, and they were intent upon pursuing their old courses as far as was possible in their altered circumstances. The council of Madras would have probably held the Circars against their claims upon the nabob for expenses incurred on his account, but the Mah-rattas were now jealous of the rising dominion of the English, and were too powerful for the English to provoke them. It was accordingly proposed to rent the Circars from the nizam (or viceroy) of the Deccan, in order to prevent the claims of the French. The nizam was willing to cede the territory; but the English, doubtful of his authority, preferred

\* *Letter from the Council of Madras to the Court of Directors, March, 1761.*



paying a rent. The nizam had, however, no sincerity in his offers, either of friendship or territory; and the English were obliged, throughout the greater part of 1765, to maintain an armed observation of his movements. The following account of the issue of these transactions is brief and clear:—"At this period, however, events had laid the King or Mogul under overwhelming obligations to the English, whose power alone upheld him on the ancient but decaying throne of Delhi. He granted them, upon application, a firman, by which they became, without conquest, lawful possessors of the Northern Circars.\* Like the rest of India, this tract had been held by rajahs and polygars, who farmed the revenue, and exercised a sort of independent authority within the limits of their states. The imperial firman released them from tribute to the soubahdar of the Deccan, as well as to the nawab (or nabob) of the Carnatic, and transferred their allegiance to the English. Since the success of the company's arms, indeed, those powers had exercised little more than a nominal influence in the Northern Circars, and some new authority was called for to rescue them from the anarchy by which they were overwhelmed. The imperial grant, conferring a legal right,† placed them at the disposal of our countrymen; all that remained to confirm them in the territory was annexation. The advantage of acquisition was apparent. It would give them possession of all the coast from the mouths of the Ganges to the Coromandel settlements,‡ excepting the province of Orissa, which, though included in the British dewanee, was held by the warlike Mahrattas.§

"When the English proceeded to take possession of their new acquisition, the nizam, rebelling openly against the imperial authority, pretended to feel exasperated at their acts,\* and prepared to make war upon them. Though entitled to enforce their privilege by arms, they preferred to negotiate peace, and agreed to rent from the nizam, for an annual sum of nine lacs of rupees, the Circars of Rajamundry, Ellore, Mustephanegur, Chicacool, and Murtezanegur; while the Guntoo Circar was allotted to Salabat Jung, the old soubahdar of the Deccan, who had been dethroned by his brother. It was, perhaps, an excess of delicacy or timidity which induced the company to offer such liberal terms; but it may have been, at that juncture, wiser than the policy of war. One stipulation in the treaty was, however, imprudent. The English agreed to assist the soubahdar with a military force whenever he should require it; thus bringing on themselves the chance of dangerous and destructive wars, which might be equally profitless to themselves and ruinous to their allies.† This article of the treaty excited severe displeasure among the court of directors.‡ However, the territory was now included in their growing empire, and the soubahdar, with shrunken dominions, was left to exercise his versatile talent for treachery by intriguing with the enemies of his allies. His power, indeed, had otherwise diminished. The Nawab of the Carnatic, once his tributary, was now, by an imperial firman, created his equal."§

The English were now virtually masters of the Northern Circars, the coast of Coromandel, and the whole Carnatic.

## CHAPTER LXXI.

### CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN WESTERN INDIA AFTER THE BREAKING OUT OF WAR BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS IN 1744—CONQUEST OF THE PIRATE ANGRIA.

AT Tellicherry and Myhic, as has been shown in former chapters, the English and French were most frequently engaged in conflict on the coast of Western India. When tidings arrived in the former place that Madras had submitted to Labourdonnaie in 1746, the utmost consternation was felt, and the chief valuables of the settlement were removed

elsewhere. The council and garrison were in daily expectation of a visit from the fleet of the conqueror, when their fears were relieved by learning that a storm had wrecked the proud ships whose thunder they expected so soon to hear.

\* Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 452.

† Penhoen's *Empire Anglais*, vol. ii. p. 456.

‡ Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 453.

§ Wilson's *Notes*, *ibid*.

\* Sutherland's *Historical Sketch of the Princes of India*, p. 82.

† Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 455.

‡ *Letter to Bengal*, 1768.

§ *History of the British Conquests in India*. By Horace St. John, vol. i. p. 106.



On the 30th of March, 1748, the *Exeter* and *Winchester*, British men-of-war, attacked the French ship *St. Louis* as she lay in the river of Myhie. She escaped by being hauled into shoal water, but so damaged as to be beyond repair.

When, in 1751, Dupleix was filling the Deccan with his fame, the council at Bombay was informed by certain spies of the King of Travancore that the French chief had formed a comprehensive plan for the destruction of the British settlements on the coast of Malabar.\* Throughout the year 1751 demonstrations and minor conflicts took place between the French of Myhie and the English of Tellicherry, without any decided advantage on either side. The conflicts which each had with the native chiefs, and the intrigues carried on with these chiefs by the two hostile European nations, have been noticed in previous chapters on the affairs of Western India. The garrisons both of Myhie and Tellicherry were after this time much reduced; the latter garrison so much, that they were unable to repress the insolence of Cuny Nair, a most contemptible antagonist. As for the French, they were in a still worse plight, fearing an attack from the Canarese, distressed for want of provisions, and unable to meet the expenses of their forts to the northward. Officers and men, tired of waiting for their arrears of pay, deserted in large numbers, and in one day a captain, ensign, engineer, mate of a man-of-war, and five other Frenchmen sought refuge in the English factory.†

Up to the end of the year 1753 the English had continued to incur great expenses for fortifications at Tellicherry and other places in Malabar; nearly 100,000 rupees had been expended, and yet the forts were reported by Sir J. Foulis to be in a ruinous condition.

In 1756 a sort of "armed neutrality" was established between Tellicherry and Myhie, both parties expecting that the war which had slumbered in Europe for a season would burst forth again with renewed fury. The French chief visited the English factory for the purpose of establishing neutrality, "a dodge" which the chiefs of Myhie constantly practised when they felt themselves comparatively weak. The English on some occasions followed this example; but although the French had repeatedly profited by their generosity, it was not reciprocated. When Fort St. David was captured, the guns of Myhie thundered their salutes, and the offer of neutrality then made by the alarmed English was scornfully rejected; but when, in 1760, French arms suffered in Tanjore, and the Circars

and their fleets were chased by the English, the chief of Myhie was eager to represent the advantages of neutrality. Again, when Louet, the French chief of the factory, supposed that Admiral Cornish and Sir Eyre Coote were approaching the coast of Malabar, his earnest importunities for neutrality, by one who had refused it when it might have been accepted with a good grace, were humiliating. The English chief on that occasion made answer, that he would refer to the president at Bombay for instructions; but he, meanwhile, prepared for action should the British force be strengthened on that coast.

From 1756 until the final subjugation of the French on the Malabar coast, the operations of both nations were desultory, and on the part of the French mainly offered through their native alliances. The English were, however, strengthening such alliances, while the French, by their arrogance, tyranny, and above all, their bigotry, were rapidly losing influence. Meanwhile, the English were busy in supplying a petty prince and zealous partizan of theirs, styled the third King of Nelloreasoon, with stores and ammunition, which he used so effectually as to capture in September the French fort of Motally, mounting twenty-two guns; although he afterwards restored it, at the intercession of the Prince of Cherical. War was not actually proclaimed until the 7th of October, when the English had the good fortune to find themselves with several warm and lukewarm friends amongst the native princes, but no avowed enemy save the Boyanore. The French, on the other hand, had many and bitter enemies; the Prince of Cherical gave up their cause, and concluded a treaty with the English; the Cotiote was exceedingly incensed against them, because they had compelled his prime-minister, from fear of his life, to profess himself a Christian; and the chief of Nelloreasoon, equally hostile to them, offered to take their forts with his own men, if the English would only garrison them afterwards—an offer which the English chief was compelled to decline, so small were the number of European troops at his disposal. Between the principals, however, of the two factories there was only an exchange of courtesies. An English picket seized a French boat laden with pepper captured from the English, on which the chief of Tellicherry, although of course detaining the cargo, sent the boat with the letters found on her, unopened, to Myhie. M. Louet, in return, released English boats seized by a captain of a French man-of-war, sent back slaves that his men had lured away, and permitted his surgeon to render medical aid at the English factory. But when a native

\* *Bombay Diary*, 14th of November, 1751.

† *Bombay Quarterly Review*, October, 1857.



officer of a French ship was detected in raising recruits on British territory, and carried before the chief in council, they behaved to him more like brigands than generous enemies. After a solemn consultation they decided upon setting him at liberty, first confiscating his silver-headed cane and picking his pocket of 380 fanams.\*

While these events transpired in the neighbourhood of Tellicherry, others connected with the war occupied the attention and care of the factors of Ajengo. From the breaking out of the war in 1744, to the peace, and again after the short peace, until the end of the resumed war, the traders of this petty place were kept in alarm by the appearance of French ships of war in the offing. Their neighbour, the King of Travancore, assumed to be their protector, and threatened very often the utter extermination of all Frenchmen, should any land near Ajengo, or offer molestation to its people. His majesty, however, never did anything to assure the factors, but very much to add to their disquiet:—

“For a series of years this warlike prince was continually making application to the British for supplies of ammunition, small arms, and cannon, offering in payment captives taken in war, which the British accepted with reluctance, although admitting that they were cheaper than their slaves imported from Madagascar. With his other offers they closed most cheerfully. He had compelled his subjects to yield him a monopoly of all pepper grown in the country, and the factors were as glad to receive that as ready cash. He ceded to them also for a term of years the province of Tinnivelly, which they leased to a merchant; and it would have been of great value to them, had not the neighbouring polygars disturbed it, until reduced to order by a force sent from Madras under Captain Calliaud.† This liberality kept the victorious monarch on excellent terms with the British, and though a tyrannical oppressor of his subjects, he seems never but on one occasion, when his emissaries beat and plundered a helpless woman within the company’s limits, to have molested the factory of Ajengo.”‡

The notice taken of Captain Calliaud’s services in a previous chapter bore upon the

policy of the Madras council, the relations of the English with the Nabob of the Carnatic, of the French with the Nizam of the Deccan, and of the issue of the policy initiated by Dupleix; it is here only necessary to say that the conduct of Calliaud ensured peace to the little factory at Ajengo, and to a certain extent along the coast of Malabar. The Tanjore monarch, grateful for the subjugation of the polygars, and always apprehensive of being subdued by the French, whom he so often boasted he would annihilate, offered no insults thenceforth to the comparatively helpless settlements of the English upon that part of the coast to which his power extended. Thus the effective operations in the war waged in the Carnatic, from Madras and St. David’s, told upon Western India, as in fact they also influenced the fortunes of Bengal. Whatever was done in the Carnatic affected the court of the Deccan and the heart of French influence in Southern India, so that along the whole shores of Malabar and Coromandel the wave of power was felt as it ebbed and flowed from the impulses within, as the waves that wash those shores are agitated by the heaving of the ocean upon the verge of which they rise or sink.

An event occurred with which the name of Clive was connected, which much influenced the peace and prosperity of the English settlements in Western India, and strengthened them against the French, although itself not connected with that enemy. When Clive had received the honours conferred upon him in England, after the glories he had won in India, he entered parliament, was ejected on petition, distributed his resources among his relatives to whom he was much attached, lived in much style, and so reduced his temporal means that he was desirous to return again to India to recruit them, just at the moment when it suited the company to employ his services, which they were anxious to do, because they expected a renewed war with France after a brief and hollow peace.

The directors appointed him to an important office in the government of Fort St. David.\* The king made him a lieutenant-colonel in the royal army. He embarked on board the *Streatham* in March, 1755, and arrived in Bombay just as the pirate Angria had received a severe chastisement from Commodore James, then commanding the company’s military marine in India.

\* Lord Macaulay says he was appointed governor. M. Auber represents him as being nominated a member of council at Fort St. David. The *Bombay Quarterly* of April, 1857, on the authority of the *Bombay Diary*, calls him deputy-governor of that place.

\* *Tellicherry Diary*, 28th of April, 15th of September, 15th of October, 9th of November, 1756. *Bombay Diary*, 28th of April, 8th of May, 30th of August, 15th of December, 1757; 30th of November, 1758. *Ives’s Voyage. Bombay Quarterly*, October, 1857, p. 221.

† As shown in previous chapters.

‡ *Bombay Quarterly. Ajengo Diary. Diary of the Select Committee. Orme’s History*, vol. i. book v. *Forbes’s Oriental Memoirs*, vol. i.



The council of Bombay were desirous of following up the victory of James by a more decisive blow. A royal fleet, accompanied by the company's navy, under Commodore James, the whole under orders of Admiral Watson, set sail for Gheria. The troops on board were commanded by Clive. In February, 1756, the armament arrived in the river, and at once attacked the stronghold of piracy in Western India. Watson succeeded in burning the whole of the enemy's ships. Clive attacked the fortress by land, which fell before his skill and valour. Prize money to the extent of £150,000 was divided among the conquerors.

The consequences of this victory were very great. The coast of Malabar was delivered from the presence of a nest of pirates, who, in resources and power, were more formidable than any piratical forces which had ever troubled the Eastern seas, or, perhaps, ever before or since ranged the ocean anywhere.

On the 12th of the October following, a treaty was formed with the Mahrattas, by which Gheria was given them by the English in exchange for Bancote and various villages. A clause was also inserted that the Dutch should never be permitted to settle in the Mahratta dominions. The rajahs holding territory along the Malabar coast were so awed, that they made haste to sign treaties conferring privileges of trade. The Mogul himself was pleased with the subjugation of the pirates, by whom his own ships were frequently captured, and the event, joined with other transactions of subsequent occurrence, conduced to the granting of a firman by the Mogul in 1759, conceding to the company the government of Surat.

After Clive accomplished the reduction of Gheria, Lord Macaulay represents him as "having proceeded to his government of Fort St. David." This is an error: he returned to Bombay, and remained there some time, supposing that his services might be again required in connection with that presidency—a fact incompatible with the assertion that he had been designated to the *supreme* government of Fort St. David.

That Lord Macaulay is wrong in the above assertion is plain enough, for Clive became involved in a dispute with the governor and council at Bombay on a question as to his own military position after the destruction of the pirate keep of Gheria. He returned to Bombay with the artillery, for the purpose of joining an expedition against the French, intended to be directed from that presidency, but which had been abandoned for another object. The Bombay council was

peculiarly supercilious to military men, and Clive, notwithstanding all his glory, was not particularly beloved by them.

A Captain de Funck, a Swedish officer who had experienced much tyranny and injustice from the president and council, was tried by court-martial, because he had refused to submit to a humiliation which the tyrannical president sought to impose upon him. The council appointed Sir James Foulis as president, an officer of ability and fairness. Clive was indignant that any officer but himself should have presided over the court, and remonstrated in angry terms. He protested to the council that he was "reduced to the necessity," as he observed, of reminding the president and council that he was commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, that he bore other distinguished titles, and had not been treated by the Honourable Richard Bouchier, Esquire—who, indeed, was never remarkable for civility—with proper courtesy. His letter was as follows:—

*Bombay, 15th of April, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—It is with much concern I find myself reduced to the necessity of delivering this letter on the subject of the general court-martial lately held on Captain De Funck.

Your honour and co. cannot be ignorant of the late Articles of War, which empower none but the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces for the time being to order a general court-martial; and your honour and co. must be sensible that, if I had interfered, no such court-martial could have sat. However, in this and indeed in everything relating to the honour, reputation, and welfare of the Honourable Company, I should gladly have acquiesced, and if your honour and co. had thought me worthy of the delegation given to Sir James Foulis, I would with pleasure have acted in obedience thereto, whom I apprehend had no right to be deemed commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, without the king's brevet of major can be proved superior to that of lieutenant-colonel.

Neither do I complain against your honour and co. for ordering the general court-martial, but against the governor only, who never thought proper to ask my advice or opinion, or even to inform me himself, or by any other person whatever, with one syllable relating thereto, and considering the rank I bear of lieutenant-colonel in his majesty's service, of Deputy Governor of St. David's, of a member of the committee of this place, I do not think I have been treated by the Honourable Richard Bouchier, Esq., agreeably to the intention of the Honourable the Court of Directors, who, I flatter myself, will do me justice herein, when they come to hear thereof.

I am, with respect, honourable sir and sirs,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT CLIVE.\*

This letter of Lieutenant-colonel Clive was answered by Daniel Draper, secretary to government, who, in the name of his superiors, tried to check the spoilt hero's arrogance by a little delicate satire. He could not, of course,

\* The above letter does not appear in any of the memoirs of Clive, and was first published in the *Bombay Quarterly* of April, 1857.



pretend to instruct *such* an officer in his military duties, but he would venture to refresh his memory on a few points which all knew, save those who were wilfully ignorant. Officers did not always attain to command by seniority, as the young colonel well knew. That depended upon the pleasure of the supreme authority. The rank of such as had been appointed for a particular service had no efficacy when that service was performed, and they were without employment. The government of Bombay fully acknowledged the respect due to his majesty's commission, but they were at liberty to choose whether they would engage Colonel Clive's military services or not. The lieutenant-colonel wrote as if he was the only bearer of this commission in Bombay; but many other officers bore it, and all concurred in the propriety of the arrangements made for this court-martial. In conclusion, the government assured him that they had no wish to insult him, as he supposed, and they would refer the question in dispute to the court of directors. The ardent spirit of Clive was pining for action. It would seem as if from very *ennui* he complained that he could not enjoy the little excitement of sitting on a court-martial, and relieved the monotony of inactive life by opening a controversial correspondence with the government. In a little time worthier occupations were found for him, and, quitting Bombay for ever, he entered a new field of fame on the other side of the continent.\*

In a chapter on the rise of the navy and army of the company, it was remarked that the troops of Bombay occasionally served in the other presidencies, and that Captain Armstrong, serving under Major Lawrence, had been tyrannically and unjustly treated by Clive.

In 1754 Captain Forbes's company of Europeans, and some Swiss and native troops, served under this Captain Armstrong with ability and bravery. Both men and officers complained of ill-treatment. Immediately after the tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta, Captain Armstrong again served with the Bombay artillery and some other troops from that presidency. He made many representations to his government of the injustice and oppression of Clive. Besides his letters to his own presidency of Bombay, "he had brought to the notice of the president in Bengal what he considered an unfair distribution of prize money, and his letter had been favourably received. Clive, offended at this, ordered him to resign his command, although no charges of misconduct had been brought against him, and to lead some aged and infirm topasses

back to Bombay. Armstrong remonstrated, and was brought to a court-martial. As he was honourably acquitted, we may suppose that he had, as he said, been harshly and unjustly treated. Clive added one more instance of his malice and disregard of law, by refusing to insert his acquittal in general orders. But none of these acts, so discreditable to the Indian hero, are recorded by his biographers, who, with the exception of a bitter and libellous foreigner, seem anxious to prove that modern biography is little more than systematised eulogy."\*

In 1760 a reinforcement was sent from Bombay to Madras, consisting chiefly of a company of European infantry and three companies of royal artillery. Thus Bombay lent considerable assistance to the other presidencies, having so little territory of its own to defend. After the destruction of the pirates, the presidency were occupied with their affairs at Gombroon in the Persian Gulf, through Bussorah with Persia, and in Carnara. These engagements were altogether commercial, although some insubordination occurred among the military at Gombroon, provoked by the neglect and arrogance of the council.

In 1760 a report reached the presidency that the Mahrattas were conspiring with the French, which was true; but it did not suit Nannah, the Mahratta chief, to avow it when the agents of the company arrived at Poonah; and whatever schemes he had in view were soon extinguished by his death. The successor of Nannah was his son Mhadcrao; and a deputation was sent by the council of Bombay to condole with him on his father's death. The chief turned the occasion to diplomatic ends, and sought to draw the English into an engagement to aid him against the viceroy of the Deccan. This the council declined; but they interposed by good offices, and appeased the wrath of the nizam. While this peaceable intercourse proceeded between the Bombay presidency and the Mahrattas of Poonah, other bodies of that strange people were harassing the borders of Bengal, so that the English president there addressed his brother of Bombay in 1761, proposing a general attack upon the Mahratta nation. The Bombay council wisely replied that the Mahrattas of Poonah regulated their affairs in such a way as not to be compromised by the conduct of their brethren further east; that it was very desirable to humble the Mahratta power, but the state of that nation and its relation to Bombay rendered the time for any attack upon it inopportune. This clear and decisive opinion prevented the attempt projected in Bengal.

\* *Bombay Diary*, April and July 20th, 1756. *Bombay Quarterly*, April 1857.

\* *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857, p. 299.



Subsequent events proved the wisdom of this decision, for the Mahrattas and the nizam became friends, although such friendship was like the summer cloud, which the slightest breeze bears away. Thus, while the affairs of the French pressed heavily on Madras and Bengal, Bombay felt little of this pressure, except in the constant warfare which was maintained by a single settlement of the presidency of Tellicherry with a single settlement of the French, Myhie. That conflict, like every other between the two nations in India, was destined to be brought at last to a close in favour of the English. After the fall of Pondicherry, the English at Tellicherry resolved upon a grand attack on Myhie. The French had hopes of securing its neutrality, and, before the fall of their capital, used renewed and suppliant efforts with the factors of Tellicherry, to secure to Myhie a neutral position. Their object was to make it a storehouse for the goods which they supposed were at Pondicherry, and might be brought thence for safety. After the fall of the capital it was hoped that Myhie might be permitted to remain as a gate to Southern India. The council at Tellicherry politely, but steadily, refused compliance with the request, reminding the petitioners that similar requests, under reasonable and justifiable circumstances, when made by the English, were insolently and haughtily repulsed, and that France had sent out orders with Lally to level all the fortified places, and even open cities where the English had any interest in India. It so happened that the council of Tellicherry sent out an expedition against Nettore, which was unsuccessful, through the treachery, bigotry, and inhumanity of native allies. A severe loss in killed and wounded was the result. The French took occasion, before the troops returned, to press for a final answer whether Myhie might calculate on neutrality. The English governor, fearing an attack on the settlement during the absence of the main body of his troops, appeared to acquiesce, while to confirm matters, as it were, he referred the proposition to Bombay. The French governor was thus led to hope that his scheme would at last succeed. The English chief was cognizant of the fact that Admiral Pococke was preparing a descent on Myhie, and he preserved an attitude of negotiation until his garrison returned from Nettore, and further, until the "pear was ripe" in the plans and projects of the naval and military authorities.

In the beginning of 1761, Major Piers, and Major, afterwards Sir Hector Munro, with detachments of royal infantry, arrived with the purpose of reinforcing Coote in the

siege of Pondicherry; but, discovering that they were too late, they proposed to the presidency of Bombay the reduction of Myhie. Their plan received the sanction of the council. There was one Captain Keir, who had been a fellow passenger to India with the wife of the French engineer on duty at the fort of Myhie. This lady had given the captain an invitation to call and see them. It was resolved that he should accept the invitation, and act as a spy. He was received in a friendly manner, and made such a report as encouraged the intended assailants. Means were taken to intercept any reliefs arriving to the garrison. The native chiefs were all or nearly all engaged in the affair, for, with the exception of Boyanore, they avowedly hated the French; and it was generally believed that that fickle chief owed them no goodwill. On the second of February English boats closed around the fortress. Louet, the commander-in-chief, pretending not to understand their object, intimated, when the first came within range of his fire, how painful the duty imposed upon him was of sinking the boat, unless it drew off, his orders being to allow no boat to approach his batteries. The reply was instantaneous and decisive, a summons to surrender. For six days the French chief refused to surrender; but, knowing that Pondicherry had fallen, and that there was no hope of succour, he offered to surrender, if but his garrison were allowed the honours of war, and that the liberty of Roman Catholic worship in the place should not be interrupted, and the churches remain the property of the clergy. All these conditions were granted. The garrison marched out with drums beating, colours flying, and with their field artillery. It was stipulated that they should not be detained as prisoners of war, but sent to the Isle of Bourbon, the Cape of Good Hope, or France, as opportunity allowed, and that the private personal property of military and civilians should be respected. All these conditions were conceded on condition that the other French forts dependent upon Myhie should be surrendered. The French factory at Calicut it was agreed should remain neutral, as that was not a place of arms, or one that the French could use for the subjugation of the natives. All these stipulations were faithfully agreed to by the English. When the garrisons marched out, the officers surrendered their swords, which were instantly returned. The captives were made the objects of the most generous kindness and respect. When Louet arrived at Tellicherry he was saluted by fifteen guns. One lady, whose husband had broken his parole, was alone detained, for some time, in imprisonment.



The fortifications of Myhie were destroyed, and in a manner formally to show that it was in consequence of the orders issued from France to level the cities and forts of the English. The work was not, however, heartily set about, and was very imperfectly performed.\* The subordinate fortresses of Motaly, Nelleasaroon, and Veremala were faithfully evacuated by the French, but immediately occupied by some Nairs, under a chief with the high-sounding title of Kapoo, Prince of Cherical, and nephew of Badenkalamkur, King Regent of Colastry. Without loss of time Munro marched against them, at the head of three hundred and eighty Highlanders, some of the company's regular and irregular troops, and two guns—a twelve and nine-pounder. Captain Nelson, late engineer of the French garrison at Myhie, joined the expedition as a volunteer, with other French officers, "keen for revenge against their black allies." Thus fell the last bulwarks of French power and influence in India. It was on the Malabar coast that the first contentions began; and when the rumble of warlike preparation was hushed, and the tap of the French drum was silent along the Coromandel shores, and in the Deccan, the din of battle was heard, and the mournful parade of vanquished and disarmed captives seen on the shores of Malabar.

The incidents of the French war were not, for a few years, followed by any of a martial nature in Western India. In 1765 another nest of sea robbers, the Malwar pirates, was rooted out, who had begun to show some activity. But a new storm soon portended. The famous Hyder had gained ascendancy in Mysore, and laid the foundation of a military dynasty. Bombay regarded with astonishment and apprehension his growing power, which indicated that a day must soon come when war with a fierce people, ably commanded, in a difficult territory, would ensue, or the presidency of Bombay, and the Carnatic, be overrun by perpetual predatory incursion, or a permanent conquest, by a barbaric race. In future pages the rise and fall of the new power in Mysore will be treated; but in the interval of the wars which issued in such fortunate results, Bombay experienced much alarm and trouble. The possession of supreme power at Surat—where first the English name became great in India, and where first English valour won victory from a European rival—gave great satisfaction to the presidency at Bombay and to the directors in London. Bombay was, for a time, the most tranquil of the English governments in India, and its commercial prosperity was developed with peace.

## CHAPTER LXXII.

EVENTS IN BENGAL AFTER THE BREAKING OUT OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE IN 1744—  
MASSACRE OF ENGLISHMEN IN THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA—EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.

THE chief interest of the French lay in the Carnatic. In Bengal their settlements were of small importance, although at Chandernagore they made considerable efforts to establish a trade. During the short war which broke out in 1744, no events of importance between the French and English occurred in their extreme eastern settlements; nor until in 1757 it became known that, after the short peace, war again raged in Europe between the two great countries. The English were, therefore, engaged in Bengal in the quiet prosecution of their trade, as far as the intrigues and exactions of the nabobs and the incursions of the Mahrattas allowed.

In the year 1747 the directors hoped that their agents in Bengal would be able to render assistance in weakening the power of the

French in other directions, for they thus addressed them on the 16th of October:—

"Par. 3. Upon our strenuous application his majesty hath been graciously pleased to send a strong squadron of men-of-war, under the command of the honourable Rear-Admiral Boscawen, with these our ships whereon this letter is sent.

"7. In case Rear-Admiral Boscawen, or the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, should require your assistance in attacking the enemy anywhere near you, we hereby order you to give it him to the utmost of your power, and to put under his command what military, marine, or other force you can possibly procure or spare consistent with the safety of your place."

So far from being able to render any assistance to the company or to the crown, the directors of affairs at Calcutta were crouching

\* *Bombay and Tellicherry Diaries. Bombay Quarterly,*



in their factory under the influence of the most abject cowardice. It is sorrowful to relate to what a degree of tameness and timidity Englishmen could have sunk in the persons of the traders at Calcutta.

The directors at home became at last so sensible of the poltroonery of their representatives in Bengal, that they wrote them a long letter on June 17, 1748, which, in two paragraphs, the second and sixth, reproaches their want of courage, and stimulates their manliness so as to do what in them lay for their own defence. These paragraphs throw an interesting light upon the character of the Anglo-Bengalce, and the spirit of the times in England relating to Indian affairs:—

“Par. 2. It is plain from the apprehension you was under on the loss of Madras, lest the French should destroy you next, that you neither thought your own strength, though supported at that time by six of his majesty’s ships, nor the neutrality of the country, a sufficient security, and you at all times stand so much in awe of the country government that they easily and shamefully raise immense contributions upon you at the company’s expense, though almost always under pretence of abuses in carrying on private trade.

“6. If you do not prevail upon the nabob to acquiesce in your setting about the works and fortifications without molestation, you are to let him know in a proper manner. You have our orders to make Calcutta as secure as you can against the French, or any other European enemy; and that if he obstructs you in following those orders you are forbid to issue any money for trade, and must do the best you can to fulfil them. Tell him that you shall be sorry to be obliged to take such measures as may be ruinous to his revenues and the trade of the country in general; and you may add, the King of England having the protection of the company greatly at heart, as they may perceive by the strong force he hath sent to the East Indies to meet the French, his majesty will support the company in whatever they think fit to do for their future security; for though a peace is now making with France, no one knows how long it may last, and when war is broke out it is always too late to make fortifications strong enough to make defence against an enterprising enemy; as appears from what happened at Madras, where strong works were erecting, but could not be half finished before the French attacked and took the place.”

Events to the year 1756 were in harmony with the state of things indicated by the letters of the directors in 1747-8. Upon the advent of the government of Suraj-ad-Dowlah as soubahdar or viceroy of Bengal, which

began on the death of his grandfather, Ali Verdi, the 9th of April, 1756, the English experienced increased oppressions, and were harassed by augmented fears. The soubahdar was a wicked young prince, voluptuous, avaricious, cruel, treacherous, and hated the English, of whose growing power his grandfather had conceived a jealousy which the grandson inherited. On various pretexts of too little interest to relate, he sought a quarrel with the English at Calcutta. His chief object was to rob the presidency, concerning the riches of which he had formed absurdly exaggerated notions. He marched against Calcutta, and on his way seized Cossimbazar, to the garrison of which he offered the alternative of indiscriminate slaughter or immediate surrender.

On the 18th of June he attacked the outposts of Calcutta. The factors had neither skill, courage, nor adequate means of defence. They had, however, vast shipping accommodation in the river, by which an orderly and easy escape was practicable. Instead of system and coolness, extreme disorder prevailed, and a cowardice utterly shameless. On the morning of the 19th, the women, children, and effects were to be sent to the ships by a decision of council formed the previous night, while the male inhabitants were to defend the place until succour might be obtained. Such was the confusion during the embarkation of the women and children, that a panic ensued, which communicated itself to the seamen; so that the ships began to move down the river, increasing the panic on shore. The chief persons in the place fled with the women, abandoning their comrades in arms and their duty, preferring dishonour to danger. The governor, Drake, whose want of capacity gave the soubahdar an excuse for the war, was among the fugitives. He was accompanied in his ignominy by Mr. Machel, Captain Commandant Minchin, and Captain Grant. Messrs. Manningham and Frankland, members of council, were the persons who set the example of cowardice, for they “dropped down the river in the *Dodally* on the night of the 18th.” The president followed with his companions in the morning. It appears that these infamous men were the means of creating the panic in the fleet, and so anxious were the council, president, commandant, and other civil and military persons of note, for their personal safety, to the disregard of all other considerations, that they ordered the company’s vessels, on board of which they were, to pass down the river, abandoning their comrades to their fate. When the flight of the government and commanders was ascertained by the rest of the



company's servants, their alarm was only exceeded by their anger. They, however, determined to defend the place, and elected Mr. Holwell to be their governor, who conducted himself with much spirit and ability in a situation for which he had no previous preparation. He afterwards wrote an account of the transactions in which he had taken so prominent a part.

John Cooke was secretary to the governor and council, and remained to share the fate of his companions in the chances of war. He was examined in 1772 by a committee of the House of Commons appointed to "inquire into the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company," and gave the following evidence:—"Signals were now thrown out," says Mr. Cooke, "from every part of the fort, for the ships to come up again to their stations, in hopes they would have reflected (after the first impulse of their panic was over) how cruel as well as shameful it was to leave their countrymen to the mercy of a barbarous enemy, and for that reason we made no doubt they would have attempted to cover the retreat of those left behind, now they had secured their own; but we deceived ourselves; and there never was a single effort made, in the two days the fort held out after this desertion, to send a boat or vessel to bring off any part of the garrison. "Never, perhaps," says Mr. Orme, referring to the catastrophe which subsequently took place, was such an opportunity of performing an heroic action so ignominiously neglected; for a single sloop, with fifteen brave men on board, might, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy, have come up, and, anchoring under the fort, have carried away all who suffered in the dungeon."

Mr. Holwell endeavoured by throwing letters over the walls to open negotiations with the enemy for favourable terms of capitulation; but those efforts were in vain, for while waiting for an answer to one of these communications, having suspended the fire of the garrison until the reply should arrive, the enemy treacherously approached the walls and stormed the place. The garrison was not given over, after Mohammedan fashion, to indiscriminate slaughter. Most of those who composed it were taken prisoners, among whom were some ladies who were not able to escape. Mr. Holwell was bound and brought before the viceroy, who immediately ordered him to be unbound. He assured him upon the faith of a soldier that no harm should happen to him or his people. When evening came, it was a question with the guards where the prisoners should be disposed of for the night, and it was resolved to place them in a

narrow chamber insufficient to hold them. The result was the destruction of most of their number before morning. This event has been memorable in Indian and in English history as the massacre of "the Black Hole of Calcutta."

The space of this apartment was only twenty feet square; it was not a den or hole, but a comparatively airy prison suitable to a small number of persons. Mill, who loses no opportunity to lower his own countrymen, from his desire to blacken the reputation of the company, treats this horrid event as one of providential retribution upon the English for using so vile a dungeon for their common prison; adducing the fact, with others, as proof of their cruelty to prisoners. He particularly adduces the state of the prison of Calcutta in 1782, as exemplifying the indifference of the English to the sufferings of prisoners, and he refers to certain allegations of cruel indifference to the lives of sepoys. There can be no doubt that the prison of Calcutta during the eighteenth century was pestilential and filthy. It is not to be denied that the English, as a nation, were apt to disregard the sufferings of inferiors, but they were never cruel to men of their own rank, when prisoners, and to enemies they had always borne the reputation of generous conquerors. Such the French have always acknowledged them to be, and no other nation has had an equal experience of them in that capacity. The whole treatment of this subject by Mill is disingenuous and unjust. Professor Wilson, always eager to do justice upon Mill himself, seizes this occasion of his unfair narrative to reply with much severity and effect as follows:—"The spirit in which this transaction is noticed, in this and the preceding note, as well as in the text, is wholly unjustifiable. It extenuates a deliberate act of wanton cruelty by erroneous assumptions and inapplicable analogies. The Black Hole was no dungeon at all; it was a chamber above ground—small and ill-aired only with reference to the number of persons forced into it, but affording abundant light and air to many more than it had ever lodged under the English administration. According to Holwell,\* it was a room eighteen feet square, with a door on one side, and two windows on another. In 1808 a chamber was shown in the old fort at Calcutta then standing, said to be the Black Hole of 1756: its situation did not correspond exactly with Mr. Holwell's description of it, but if not the same, it was a room of the same description and size, such as is very

\* Letter to Dr. Davis, 28th February, 1757; published in Holwell's *India Tracts*.



common amongst the offices of both public and private buildings in Calcutta, and no doubt accurately represented the kind of place which was the scene of this occurrence. It bore by no means the character of a prison. It was much more light, airy, and spacious than most of the rooms used formerly by the London watch, or at present by the police, for purposes of temporary durance. Had a dozen or twenty people been immured within such limits for a night, there would have been no hardship whatever in their imprisonment, and in all probability no such number of persons ever was confined in it. The English, then, in the objectionable sense in which the author chooses to understand the 'Black Hole,' never had such a prison. The state of the Calcutta jail, in 1782, like that of the common jails in England or in Europe, was, no doubt, bad enough; but it is not said that its inmates had ever died of want of air, or that one hundred and twenty perished in a single night. Even if the excuse of inconsiderateness might be urged for driving the prisoners into a space so utterly inadequate to their numbers, there was abundant opportunity to correct the mistake, when it was seen what suffering it occasioned. The whole transaction admits of no defence: it was an exemplification of Mohammedan insolence, intolerance, and cruelty; and in contemplating the signal retribution by which it has been punished, a mind susceptible of reverence, though free from superstition, can scarcely resist the impression, that the course of events was guided by higher influences than the passions and purposes of man."

The horrors of the massacre itself mock description. When the unfortunate victims were but a short time within the precincts of their prison, their sufferings became intense, and their cries for mercy were as vehement as the agonies of despair could make them. Their guards mocked them, some of their keepers holding up lights to the gratings for the others to have the satisfaction of witnessing the struggles and poignant sufferings of those doomed to death. A general rush for the neighbourhood of the windows added to the horrors of the occasion, and the desperate efforts to obtain a position near the apertures for air caused many of the weaker to be trampled to death by the stronger. This also afforded amusement to their callous hearted keepers. Mr. Holwell, who obtained a place near a window with some others, offered money to the sentinels to procure water, some received the bribe, and did not perform the stipulated service, others were more merciful. One benevolent soldier brought water repeatedly, and showed by the expression of

his countenance as he held up his hand, a kind and pitying disposition.

To the appeals which were made by Mr. Holwell for some one to convey to the viceroy a knowledge of their condition, the reply was that he slept, and no one dare awake him. In the morning, when he did awake, and sent for the prisoners, twenty-three men and one woman alone remained alive, and most of these were found insensible among the already putrefying dead. Such was the case with the governor. The lady who was amongst the living, the viceroy took to his harem. The poorer prisoners, from whom no money could be extorted, were dismissed: the principal persons among the survivors were kept standing in chains before the tyrant soubahdar, and threatened with death if they did not disclose where treasure was hid. As no treasure was obtained, they were sent, loaded with irons, to Moorshedabad. No clemency was shown to the survivors, who were fed with rice and water in quantities insufficient. The tyrant did everything short of murdering his victims.

Mr. Mill thinks that the tragedy of "the Black Hole" might have been averted if the persons incarcerated had offered a bribe to one of the superior officers of the soubahdar, and adds, "to no one does it appear that this expedient occurred." Of course, it was impossible for them to reach any "officer of high authority," except through the medium of their keepers, whom it is not at all likely the imprisoned failed to urge by every persuasive, money included, to take the steps most likely to secure them a more lenient place of confinement. Hugh Murray, Esq., in his *History of British India* (p. 317), declares that what Mr. Mill represents the English as too stupid to think of, was actually tried, without success, by Mr. Holwell. His language is, "The jemautdars, or Indian guards, were walking before the window, and Mr. Holwell, seeing one who bore on his face a more than usual expression of humanity, adjured him to procure for them a room in which they could breathe, assuring him next morning of a reward of 1000 rupees. The man went away—but returned, saying it was impossible. Thinking the offer had been too low, the prisoners tendered 2000 rupees. The man again went,—and returned, saying that the nabob was asleep, and no one durst awake him;—the lives of one hundred and forty-six men being nothing in comparison to disturbing for a moment the slumbers of a tyrant." Not only the confinement in "the Black Hole," but the whole of the siege and capture of Calcutta is related by the historian Mill with the animus of one who desired to expose and inculcate his own countrymen as much as possible,



and extenuate the conduct of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, meriting the indignant protest which was written by Horace St. John, in his work on Indian history:—"The ingenuity, not to say the eloquence, of a British historian has been perverted to fabricate, or at least to suggest, a defence of this celebrated crime. It might appear to him heroic to defend what all the rest of mankind declared infamous; but that act is justly condemned as susceptible of no palliation. It was the cruelty of a Mohammedan despot.\* A hint is, indeed, insinuated by another writer, on the authority of native accounts, that Suraj-ad-Dowlah was innocent of the deed, and that stupidity, not wickedness, caused the misery which ensued to the victims.† The ferocious character of the prince, however, renders this a weak plea for his reputation. It appears certain that by his will such vengeance was dealt on the English, and the blood of a hundred and forty-three unhappy men cried for punishment upon their murderers. This is no illiberal interpretation of history, for, clear Suraj-ad-Dowlah of this crime, and he is still a monster. It was as notorious to the Europeans as it was to his own people, and his inhumanity was persevering.‡ If ever a nation had cause of war, Great Britain then had. That people would have been unworthy of an empire which did not rise to punish the author of such a crime."§

When tidings of these events arrived in Madras and Fort St. David, the feeling produced among the English was one of intense indignation, and a determination, if possible, to regain their lost position and avenge their murdered countrymen. Colonel Clive had remained at St. David's after he left Bombay. Admiral Watson was upon the coast with a very considerable navy, so that there was no want of able commanders, and there existed tolerable resources to avenge the injury that had been sustained. Meanwhile, Suraj-ad-Dowlah made ostentatious triumph, tidings of which reached the British, and still further deepened their resentment. The brutal soubahdar informed his master, upon the tottering throne of Delhi, that he had expelled the English from Bengal, forbid Englishmen for ever to dwell within its precincts, purged Calcutta of the infidels, and, to commemorate the event, called it by a new name—Alinagore, the Port of God. It was in August that the dreadful news of the fall of Calcutta, and the murder of so many Englishmen, reached Madras; and Lord Macaulay ex-

presses his admiration of the fact that so inflamed was the military ardour of the garrison, that in forty-eight hours they determined upon an expedition up the Bay of Bengal and the Hoogly. It was the universal desire out of the council that Clive should have the command of the army, which eventually consisted of nine hundred English infantry and fifteen hundred sepoys. These set forth, as Lord Macaulay has written, "to punish a prince who had more subjects than Louis the Fifteenth or the Empress Maria Theresa."

The fitting out of the expedition was not as prompt as the determination to accomplish it. It was not until October that it set sail against adverse winds, which kept it beating about in the bay until December. The cause of this delay was highly discreditable to the English. The following account of it by Mill is too true for the honour of the president and council of Madras:—"It was resolved, after some debate, that the re-establishment of the company's affairs in Bengal should be pursued at the expense of every other enterprise. A dispute, however, of two months ensued, to determine in what manner prizes should be divided; who should command; and what should be the degree of power entrusted with the commander. The parties, of whom the pretensions were severally to be weighed, were Mr. Pigot, who had been Governor of Madras since the departure of Saunders, but was void of military experience; Colonel Aldercron, who claimed as senior officer of the king, but was unacquainted with the irregular warfare of the natives; Colonel Lawrence, whose experience and merit were unquestionable, but to whose asthmatical complaints the close and sultry climate of Bengal was injurious; and Clive, to whom none of these exceptions applied. It was at last determined that Clive should be sent. It was also determined that he should be sent with powers independent of the presidency of Calcutta. Among his instructions, one of the most peremptory was, that he should return, and be again at Madras with the whole of the troops, in the month of April; about which time it was expected that in consequence of the war between France and England, a French fleet would arrive upon the coast. It was principally, indeed, with a view to this return, that independence of the Calcutta rulers, who might be tempted to retain him, was bestowed upon Clive."

The viceroy was enjoying the pastime of torturing flies and other animals, imprisoning and executing human victims, and revelling in every debauch at his capital of Moorshedabad. He revelled, too, in security as to enemies domestic and foreign. He was not

\* See Sraffton's *Account*, p. 52.

† Stewart's *History of Bengal*, p. 505.

‡ Penhoen's *Empire Anglais*, vol. ii. p. 33.

§ *British Conquests in India*, chap. ix. p. 73.



much better or worse than many other Mohammedan princes, to whom "the faithful" rendered a conscientious and even contented allegiance. His ideas of European powers were the most unenlightened. He had, it is true, been jealous of the English, but he supposed that if their power in India were once broken, they had no resources behind to press forward again their beaten Indian forces. In all his views he was flattered by his minions, for none dare call in question the opinions of the sanguinary voluptuary.

Before the tardy English had consumed the many intervening months, there was time for the tyrant to miss the revenues their commerce yielded. His ministers were compelled to disclose the unwelcome intelligence that the gains of his treasury were much diminished since the traders were expelled, and as he encouraged the expression of their views, he was informed that the only remedy was to allow them to return, to tax them heavily, so as to obtain for himself a large portion of their profits, but otherwise to allow them to trade in peace and with security to their persons and their property. He was convinced by these arguments, and was in the frame of mind which they were calculated to produce, when he was astounded by the intelligence that a force of armed Englishmen and a proud war-fleet were in the Hoogly. He had not heard of the preparations against him, and if his ministers had, they did not deem it politic to inform him. However vexed, he was not alarmed. He expected to annihilate in a short time the feeble force which landed, and gave express orders to his generals to perform that feat. He drew in his forces to Moorshedabad, and marched at their head to Calcutta. But before he had collected his troops for the accomplishment of his design, Clive, with his usual rapidity of action, had inflicted defeat and humiliation upon the soubahdar's garrisons. The fleet was moved up the river to the vicinity of Moidapore, the admiral intending the next morning to attack the fort of Budge-Budge, about ten miles below the town. Clive, not aware that the enemy were encamped in the vicinity, landed and ordered his men to lie down to rest. In thus acting Clive committed a rashness which might have terminated the war. Orme describes him as having placed his men in a position which left a surprise possible, and as having neglected the precaution of outposts and sentinels. The result was what might have been expected—a sudden attack of the enemy, who came on timidly, and were led by a coward. Still the attack was perilous, and it required all Clive's courage and address to avert a catastrophe. The cavalry of the enemy held back; had they

charged, Clive would have found it impossible to have presented a formation which would have issued in a repulse. This was an exemplification of the rashness and fearlessness of the man. Repeatedly, in the Carnatic, when serving under Lawrence, and when in chief command, he exposed himself and his soldiers, and the cause for which they fought, to imminent danger of destruction, by a foolhardy contempt of foes, and indifference to death. The surprise effected by the enemy enabled the garrison to penetrate the plan of the commander, which was to intercept its flight when the cannonade of the fleet should drive it from the fort. The native force, however, abandoning the fort in the night, stole away in a direction which Clive could not have supposed probable, and baffled his designs. His generalship was, and not for the first time, at fault. Clive marched along by land; Watson sailed up the river. The enemy retreated from the various positions which they occupied, almost without firing a shot. The valour and discipline displayed by the Europeans in the surprise taught the enemy a salutary lesson.

On the 2nd of January, 1757, the armament was before Calcutta. A few broadsides from the fleet expelled the garrison. The merchandise was found in the condition it was left when the English council fled, as the viceroy had ordered it to be reserved for himself. All the private dwellings had been sacked.

Upon the capture of the place, jealousies sprang up between the admiral and Colonel Clive. The admiral desired to exclude the company's troops from the garrison. Clive insisted that they were the proper portion of the armament to assume that duty. They also differed as to who should appoint a governor of the city. Clive vindicated his claims with determination. The bickerings which commenced between the admiral and colonel continued throughout the whole time of their co-operation in the service. Captain Coote was ordered with a detachment to attack Hoogly, which was captured, the enemy offering a poor resistance. Prize-money, to the extent of £15,000, fell to the forces by this capture.

The viceroy, alarmed at these successes, opened negotiations. According to most historians, overtures were made by Clive, who, whatever his boldness in actual battle, was liable to be awed by the magnitude of a great undertaking before actually entered upon. He had now the whole army of the viceroy of Bengal before him, and a handful of troops to combat that great army. Lord Macaulay maintains that the overtures were



made by the soubahdar, and that he offered to restore to the English their settlements, and make compensation for the injuries which he had inflicted. Admiral Watson was opposed to overtures for peace being either made or accepted by the British. As to the places previously in the possession of the English, they had just captured them; as to compensation, they could take it. On the whole, the admiral thought that until Suraj felt that his viceroyalty itself was in danger, and was obliged to sue for peace after severe losses and defeats, he would remain a treacherous although flexible foe, ever ready to make war when an opportunity arose. By striking a bold and decisive blow, the admiral believed permanent peace might be secured.

Clive hesitated: in the language of Mr. Murray, "He was not yet fully aware of the weakness of Indian potentates, and was by no means forward to rush into a contest with the ruler of twenty millions of men." It was plain in these differences that Watson had not confidence in either the intelligence or stability of Clive, although placing the utmost reliance upon his audacity and presence of mind in the most appalling danger, and in his fertility of invention in all sudden emergencies. Lord Macaulay gives a view of Clive's relation to these transactions somewhat different from this. He says, "Clive's profession was war, and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Surajad-Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts and be compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The provinces of the nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful; and Clive consented to treat, though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished." His lordship adds, "With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect with eminent ability and valour the plans of others. Henceforward he is chiefly to be regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered subordinate to his military designs."

Mill says that the anger of the viceroy was influenced by the capture of Hoogly, which the English attacked solely for plunder, and therefore he ordered his army to march against Calcutta. These statements are not borne out

by the facts as related by Mr. Mill himself, when received as a whole. The expedition of Coote to Hoogly was a fair and lawful operation of a war of reprisals, and the fact that after the capture of Hoogly the soubahdar temporised and pretended to be desirous of peace is indisputable.

Hugh Murray says, referring to the different views of Clive and Watson, that the former prevailed so far that a mission was sent to the soubahdar, who received it honourably, and even proposed terms that were considered admissible; but the writer adds, concerning the prince, "He did not, however, discontinue his march, and by various evasions avoided bringing the treaty to a conclusion." Lord Macaulay takes the same view of the nabob's conduct. The French at Chandernagore, at this juncture, according to Mill, proposed neutrality, even although their respective nations were at war in Europe. This, however, was a feint, for the French at that station could not but know the design of their countrymen to drive the British out of India, and the policy of rejecting proposals of neutrality whenever they were strong enough to make war. Professor Wilson remarks upon this alleged offer, and the time at which Mill represents it to have been made:—"There is some contradiction in the statements of different authorities on this subject, which can be reconciled only by a consideration of dates and circumstances. It appears probable that the French were not informed of the war in Europe until after the march of the nawab to Calcutta, and the negotiations for peace with the English. They could not, therefore, have joined him sooner, and to prevent that junction taking place was one of Clive's reasons for agreeing to the treaty more readily than was thought advisable by Admiral Watson. He writes to the chairman, 'I know there are many who think I have been too precipitate in the conclusion of the treaty, but they never knew that the delay of a day or two might have ruined the company's affairs, by the junction of the French with the nawab, which was on the point of being carried into execution.'\* With the conclusion of the treaty, the French lost their opportunity of co-operating with the nawab. Their negotiations for a neutrality were subsequent to the nawab's retreat; and if Clive's account of the matter be correct, the English had not much reason to be grateful for their forbearance."

The soubahdar, after making many pretences of negotiation, appeared on the 3rd of February before Calcutta, immediately investing it. Clive's resolve the next morning to attack this camp has been severely criticised, and

\* *Life*, i. 170.



with justice. A thick mist also obscured his operations. Nevertheless, he succeeded in cutting through the camp, and returned, having suffered as well as inflicted heavy loss. The nabob was terrified at so audacious an act of courage, and became earnest in his overtures for peace, and on the 9th of February a treaty was concluded. The terms were the same as he at first offered, with an additional article that the English might fortify Calcutta. Two days afterwards he proposed a treaty offensive and defensive, to which the English assented, and which was concluded on the same day.

Clive was anxious to attack the French factory of Chandernagore; but the soubahdar, willing to see the French in his dominions, as a counterpoise to the too powerful English, resisted, and made such a demonstration of force as deterred the English from the attempt. Clive maintained that either a treaty of neutrality with that French station, or an immediate attack upon it, was essential to the security of English interests, and he proposed one, which the French said they must refer to the president at Pondicherry, but which Clive signed definitively. Watson, who always found scruples for refusing to do that upon which Clive was bent, or reason for performing what Clive hesitated to undertake, refused his signature. When Clive was for attacking Chandernagore, Watson refused, without the consent of the viceroy, which he knew would not be given. Large reinforcements arrived at this time for the English, and they refused to ratify the treaty with the French of Chandernagore. While the English were uncertain how to act in reference to Chandernagore, they became apprised of the fact that the government of Pondicherry was opposed to neutrality, and merely desired, by negotiation, to gain time, while they were instigating the viceroy to rely on them, and forming an alliance to expel the English at last. The prince, however, was alarmed by the invasion and capture of Delhi by Ahmed Shah, the Abdallee, and the rumour that the invader had determined to march against Bengal. In his consternation he sent to the English, entreating their aid, and showing his desire to gain it on almost any terms. A council was called, at which the feeble Mr. Drake, who had run away from Calcutta, presided: Mr. Beecher, Major Kilpatrick, and Colonel Clive were the other members. It was then debated whether an attack should be made on Chandernagore. Clive gives the following amusing account of the way in which the council argued and voted:—"Mr. Beecher gave his opinion for a neutrality, Major Kilpatrick for a neutrality; he himself gave his opinion for the attack of

the place; Mr. Drake gave an opinion that nobody could make anything of. Major Kilpatrick then asked him whether he thought the forces and squadron could attack Chandernagore and the nabob's army at the same time?—he said he thought they could; upon which Major Kilpatrick desired to withdraw his opinion, and to be of his. They voted Mr. Drake's no opinion at all; and Major Kilpatrick and he being the majority, a letter was written to Admiral Watson, desiring him to co-operate in the attack on Chandernagore."

Drake was a man without patriotism or honour. His sole object was to be allowed to preside quietly in Calcutta, at the head of the council, and turn the trading affairs of the company to some account, and his own to results more profitable. He was jealous of Clive, intrigued with the directors in London and the council in Madras to have Clive's independent command withdrawn, and for that officer either to be placed under his orders, or removed from Bengal. Incredible as it may seem that any man who had deserted his duty and dishonoured his country, as Drake had done, could desire to remove the only officer capable of making head against the enemy, such was the fact. He therefore opposed all Clive's movements; and Admiral Watson, seeing that the counsels on shore were so divided, had the more scope for his perpetually recurring conscientious scruple against any measure either for negotiation or army proposed by that able and indomitable man. The following statement of Clive's instructions, and of extracts of Drake's letters for the suppression of Clive's independent authority, will account to the reader for all the difficulties which arose among the English themselves whenever Clive proposed any new undertaking:—"The orders given to the admiral and Colonel Clive when they left Madras were, to obtain full reparation of all injuries, and eventually to attack the tyrant in his capital. The council, on the 8th of January, advised the court of directors of the recapture of Calcutta, and, on the 31st, of the success against Hoogly. In the latter despatch they adverted to the instructions from the president at Fort St. George, directing that Colonel Clive, as commander of all the forces, might be furnished with plans for a treaty with the nabob, having placed four lacs of rupees at his command, and empowered him to deviate from the whole or part of such plans, should he consider them to be inconsistent with the company's interests. The council at Calcutta appeared to view with strong feelings of jealousy the position in which Clive stood towards them by virtue of those instructions. They remarked, in their letter



to the directors, that 'the authority the select committee at Fort St. George have assumed, in appointing Colonel Clive commander-in-chief of the forces in Bengal, is so unaccountable, that we cannot avoid taking notice of it as an encroachment of the rights and trusts invested in us.' Notwithstanding the important services Clive had already rendered, and the probability of the nabob's advancing towards Calcutta, the council added, 'We have required of Colonel Clive to recede from the independent powers given him by the select committee, but he has refused to surrender that authority; we must therefore leave it to you, honourable sirs, to take notice of so injurious a conduct in your servants on the coast.' Adverting to the powers which he possessed, he stated to the court of directors, in a letter dated 'the camp near Calcutta: ' 'All propositions the council make will be attended to; and, for my part, you may be assured that, notwithstanding my independent command, I shall endeavour to maintain a perfect harmony with them, and act throughout with their participation. They thought proper, some time ago, to demand a surrender of my commission as commander-in-chief, and that I would put myself under their orders. While I looked upon myself as obliged to refuse, in justice to those who had entrusted me with such powers, I represented that I had no intention of making use of any independent powers, unless they induced me to it by necessity, for we had but one common interest to pursue, which was that of the company, and as long as that was kept in view, they would always find me ready to follow their instructions.' Colonel Clive's communication appears to have been governed by a just sense of the position in which he was placed, and to have manifested every disposition to act in harmony with the council, who felt aggrieved at their power having been set aside. At such a juncture, all personal feeling should have been waived for the common good, especially in favour of an officer who had evinced such qualifications."\*

This correspondence, thus quoted and commented upon, shows that from the first moment of his success at Bengal, the old council thwarted him, anxious for any compromise, so that they might pursue their private gains. The men who fled with the women when Calcutta was besieged, leaving the supreme posts of government and military direction vacant, were not likely to consent to any course of action of a bold and vigorous nature

\* Auber's *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. ii. pp. 56—59.

to avenge the murder of their countrymen or vindicate the honour of their country. They longed for a money compromise which they should largely share, and of the division of which they should have the patronage. Patriotism and honour were words of no meaning to them. Having from the beginning of Clive's expedition acted in that spirit, they looked with much animosity upon the projected attack on Chandernagore, that expedition and all other military undertakings tending to keep Clive with his independent commission in the province, and to increase his renown, influence, and perhaps his direct power, which was ultimately the case. Clive, however, had made up his mind to drive the French from Bengal, and he lost no time in carrying his purpose into effect. The intrigues which followed the events just related, and which surrounded the indomitable Clive, who was the life and soul of English enterprise, were complicated, intricate, and unprincipled. The native powers, the French, and the English, all endeavoured to deceive one another, and all were unscrupulous in the means which they employed. It has become the fashion among English writers—a fashion set by Mill—to traduce the character of the British on all occasions of temptation during the trials which at that period beset them. Much injustice is done to the Anglo-Indians of that day by their countrymen of the present age. Impartial justice demands at all events a verdict in their favour when they are compared with either French or natives. The French showed far less honour and political morality than the English, and the conduct of natives of all ranks, sects, and classes was profoundly corrupt, treacherous, venal, and cruel. Princes, diplomatists, generals, merchants, and people were utterly without honour or principle, with rare exceptions. The course of conduct generally pursued by them was so perfidious and wicked, that where a simple and direct procedure would have better served their purposes, they preferred chicane, meanness, cowardice, and folly. They exemplified the truth of the saying, "*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*" They reaped as they sowed, nabob, soubahdar and people: a judicial vengeance politically befell them. It would be an endless task to unravel the many skeins of artifice which were spun around the policy of natives, French, and English at this time. Let it suffice to observe that Clive's skilful manœuvres and bold schemes defeated the coalesced French and natives, and that, finally, the French were driven from Bengal.



## CHAPTER LXXIII.

## DETHRONEMENT OF SURAJ-AD-DOWLAH—BATTLE OF PLASSEY—THE ENGLISH MASTERS OF BENGAL.

THE defeat and humiliation of the French left the British no European rivals in Bengal. There were still other European factories and settlements, but there was no prospect, and scarcely any possibility of their possessors rising to great power, or of even attempting to dispute the position and influence of the English. The agreements entered into by the latter with the soubahdar upon the expulsion of the French, and in connection with that event, were not fulfilled by the native government to the satisfaction of the conquerors, and hence disputes arose which led to war, and to the final conquest of Bengal by the British. Modern writers, especially upon the continent of Europe, allege that these quarrels were fomented by the English, in order to find a pretext for pushing their conquests; and Clive is especially accused of having been the evil genius of this policy. In support of this view much reliance is placed upon the statement of Clive, which he made to the House of Commons, that, "after Chandernagore was resolved to be attacked, he repeatedly said to the committee, as well as to others, that they could not stop there, but must go further; that, having established themselves by force, and not by consent of the nabob, he would endeavour to drive them out again; that they had numberless proofs of his intentions, many upon record; and that he did suggest to Admiral Watson and Sir George Pococke, as well as to the committee, the necessity of a revolution; that Mr. Watson and the gentlemen of the committee agreed upon the necessity of it; and that the management of that revolution was, with consent of the committee, left to Mr. Watts, who was resident at the nabob's capital, and himself; that great dissatisfaction arising among Suraj-ad-Dowla's troops, Meer Jaffier was pitched upon to be the person to place in the room of Suraj-ad-Dowla, in consequence of which a treaty was formed." Clive never intended to intimate, by what he thus stated, that the idea of deposing the soubahdar arose with the English: the fact was otherwise. The English only took up a suggestion made by certain of the soubahdar's subjects; and, as Lord Clive intimates in his statement just quoted, and as he elsewhere declared, he was actuated, in falling in with the plans of the conspirators, by the necessity of the case. The soubahdar never intended to fulfil any of his agreements: he hated and feared the

English too much ever to be at ease while they held power and influence in Bengal. Lord Macaulay describes his state of mind and proceedings at this period in terms as correct as expressive:—

"The French were now vanquished; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day, he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal 'against Clive, the daring in war, on whom,' says his highness, 'may all bad fortune attend.' He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts, and begged pardon for the insult. In the meantime, his maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects—soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mohammedans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable conspiracy was formed against him, in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance; Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of his troops; and Jugget Seit,\* the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad, and the committee at Calcutta. In the committee there was much hesitation; but Clive's voice was given for the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Suraj-ad-Dowla, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. . . . The odious vices of Suraj-ad-Dowla, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him."

"The odious vices of Suraj," in spite of Lord Macaulay's opinion to the contrary, afforded

\* Properly, "Set."



no justification whatever to the English for the part they took, neither did they rest their conduct on any such foolish ground. "The wrongs which the English had suffered at his hand" would have afforded as little justification for their connection with the conspiracy as his odious vices. Suraj had compensated these wrongs, and placed himself not only on terms of amity, but alliance with those whom he had so foully injured. Neither did the British rest their procedure upon any wrongs endured by them in the previous war. "The dangers to which our trade must have been exposed" is too vague an allegation to justify an ally for entering into a conspiracy; but there is no doubt a conviction that such dangers impended, influenced the committee at Calcutta. Clive, by whose advice the overtures of the conspirators were entertained, based his policy upon the facts that the faithless tyrant had broken treaty with the British, and intrigued for their overthrow with the French in the Carnatic, and at the court of the Deccan; and Clive also rested his policy on the obvious truth that a man so vindictive, foolish, and capricious as Suraj could never be a safe ally, and would always prove a treacherous foe, as he had already proved himself to be. The clear evidence afforded that the infatuated prince was resolved to attempt the expulsion of the English at the first favourable moment, and had already set on foot traitorous designs, thereby violating all his engagements, afforded better justification for the desire and purpose to depose him than that which Lord Macaulay urges in Clive's defence. The first ostensible cause of dispute was the refusal of Suraj to deliver up certain French who had collected at Cossimbazar. The nabob furnished M. Law,\* the chief of the French factory there, with arms, ammunition, and even money, and sent him and his people to Bahar. Clive detached a part of his army to intercept the fugitives, and incensed as well as alarmed the nabob by the boldness of such a measure. From this incident began open altercations between the British and Suraj, of such a nature as plainly portended not only a speedy breach of the alliance, but open war.

The plot referred to in the quotation from Lord Macaulay was one of the fruits of this state of things. It was not the first conspiracy formed against Suraj by his own subjects and officers, nor were the proposals which arose out of it the first made to the English by the nabob's subjects against him; but the project of Meer Jaffier appeared to the British the most feasible, or possibly "the

pear was then ripe." Meer Jaffier was not actually in the employment of Suraj, as the quotation from Lord Macaulay would indicate, when he first opened communications with the English. He had been deposed, and in a manner likely to make him a rebel. That chief was, however, a person of too much consequence to remain long out of the public service, for he had held high rank in the army of Ali Verdi, to whose sister he had been married. His rank was that of an independent military chief, in which anomalous position he raised and paid his army, which nominally was in the service of the nabob, but really regarded as its chief the general who recruited and paid it.

When negotiations were fully opened between the conspirators at Moorshedabad and the English at Calcutta, co-operation was agreed upon in manner and on terms which have been much censured by historians. The English senate resounded during many sessions of the last century with denunciations of the venality and treachery of the committee at Calcutta during these transactions; and the English press threw forth innumerable sheets filled with reclamations and abuse of the British chiefs. Lord Macaulay, who vindicates the deposition of the nabob, and the coalition of the English and the native party in the revolt of the latter, condemns Clive for writing soothing letters to the nabob and keeping up the semblance of amity. It must be obvious to every reflecting reader that if it were right for the English to co-operate in the conspiracy at all, it was necessary to carry out their project by preserving appearances until the hour arrived for throwing off the alliance openly. His lordship is obviously inconsistent in excusing the one part taken by the English and censuring the other. Whatever be the merits of the case, Clive did no more than English diplomatists, and all other diplomatists, European and Oriental, have done ever since—conceal the purpose of their governments to throw off an alliance until opportune occasion. Governments with which Lord Macaulay has been connected, and which have had all the service of his peculiar rhetoric, have shown as much laxity in the ethics of their diplomacy.

Probably no part of the conduct of the English has been so severely handled by moral critics as the pecuniary bargain made with Meer Jaffier by the Calcutta committee. Jaffier readily undertook to pay large demands made by the English. In name of compensation for losses by the capture of Calcutta, 10,000,000 rupees were promised to the English company, 5,000,000 rupees to English inhabitants, 2,000,000 to the Indians, and

\* For an account of whom see chapter on the French East India Company.



700,000 to the Armenians. These sums were specified in the formal treaty. Over and beside this, it was resolved by the committee of the council—that is, the small number of individuals by whom the business was performed—that a donation of 2,500,000 rupees should be asked for the squadron; and another of equal amount for the army. “When this was settled,” says Lord Clive, “Mr. Becher (a member) suggested to the committee, that he thought that committee, who managed the great machine of government, was entitled to some consideration, as well as the army and navy.” Such a proposition, in such an assembly, could not fail to appear eminently reasonable. It met with general approbation. Mr. Becher informs us that the sums received were 280,000 rupees by Mr. Drake, the governor; 280,000 by Colonel Clive; and 240,000 each, by himself, Mr. Watts, and Major Kilpatrick, the inferior members of the committee. The terms obtained in favour of the company were, that all the French factories and effects should be given up; that the French should be for ever excluded from Bengal; that the territory surrounding Calcutta to the distance of six hundred yards beyond the Mahratta ditch, and all the land lying south of Calcutta as far as Calpee, should be granted them on zemindary tenure, the company paying the rents in the same manner as other zemindars.

Mr. Mill, with an impartiality and justice of which he is too often very sparing where the conduct of the company’s servants is concerned, makes the following critique upon this pecuniary arrangement, on account of which Clive and the council have been so frequently stigmatised as venal and corrupt:—“These presents, which were afterwards made use of by the personal enemies of Clive, to effect his annoyance and attempt his ruin, detract much from the splendour of his reputation, and reflect discredit upon all who were parties to their acceptance. That general, admiral, and members of the select committee, were alike influenced by a grasping and mercenary spirit is undeniable, and they seized, with an avidity which denoted a lamentable absence of elevated principles, upon an unexpected opportunity of realizing princely fortunes. At the same time, many considerations may be urged in their excuse, and a more disinterested conduct would have exhibited in them a very extraordinary exception to the prevailing practices and feelings of the times. The servants of the company had never been forbidden to receive presents from the natives of rank, and as they were very ill paid, it was understood that they were at liberty to pay themselves in any manner they could which

did not injure their employers. The making of presents was an established practice amongst the natives, and is one which they even yet consider as a necessary part of friendly or formal intercourse, and although, agreeably to their notions, it is most incumbent on the inferior to approach his superior with an offering, yet on great public occasions, and especially upon any signal triumph, the distribution of liberal donations to the army and the chief officers of the court is a natural result. There was nothing more than customary, therefore, in the gift of large sums of money by Meer Jaffier to those to whom he was indebted for his accession; and, as there was neither law nor usage opposed to the acceptance of his donations by the servants of the company, and as they were avowedly expected and openly received, there was nothing dishonest in the transaction. That the amount of the presents was excessive, may be attributed, in some degree, to the erroneous opinion entertained probably by Meer Jaffier, and certainly by the company’s servants, of the great wealth in the treasury of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, which admitted of such deduction. With a just regard to circumstances and seasons, therefore, it is unjust to expect from the servants of the company a lofty disregard of personal advantage, although they would have merited more unqualified admiration had they disdained their private enrichment in the noble aim of promoting the public good: much unhappiness would have been avoided by themselves, much misery would have been spared to Bengal.” That many of the persons engaged in these arrangements were actuated by motives the most selfish and venal, the minor transactions connected with them incidentally reveal. The discussion which arose in the committee as to how much its inferior members were to receive is a case in point. The distribution of 240,000 rupees each to Becher, Watts, and Kilpatrick, led to a dispute, which Clive thus accounted for and described:—“Upon this being known, Mr. Watson replied that *he* was entitled to a share in that money. He (Clive) agreed in opinion with the gentlemen, when this application was made, that Mr. Watson was not one of the committee, but at the same time did justice to his services, and proposed to the gentlemen to contribute as much as would make his share equal to the governor’s and his own; that about three or four consented to it, the rest would not.”

In order to carry out the compact, the English were to make open war, and advancing a small force, the General Meer Jaffier would join it at Cutwa with his own troops, and as many other detachments from the



nabob's army as he might be able to gain over through the instrumentality of other military malcontents. Clive put himself at the head of a very small body of men, and marched to Cutwa, but on arriving at the rendezvous, he found no allies. This disquieted him, for he had but little confidence in the courage, capacity, or sincerity of the conspirators. His disquietude was increased by letters from Moorshedabad, informing some of the natives in his camp that the conspiracy had been revealed to the nabob, and that Meer Jaffier had only saved his life by promising to aid with his best endeavours the prosecution of the war against the English. These tidings were soon followed by a letter from Meer Jaffier himself, informing Clive that the nabob, suspecting some designs against his throne, had compelled him to swear fidelity upon the Koran. The general pleaded his oath as a reason for not having fulfilled his engagement so far, but declared that on the day of battle he would go over to Clive with his army. This epistle furnished an illustration of Mohammedan casuistry. The oath of fidelity upon the Koran preserved so far the fealty of the rebel chief that he would not at once go over to his ally, but would, nevertheless, hold friendly communications with him, and propose new modes of destroying his master's interests, which on the day of battle he promised to betray. Clive no longer trusted Meer Jaffier, who was playing a double game. He had committed the English to an undertaking which they would not have ventured upon without his aid; yet his own purpose was to observe neutrality, and play off both the forces, that of the British and that of the nabob, against one another, and make his own terms with the ultimate conqueror. Clive, with all his impetuous and rash boldness, felt the desperate nature of his position, and was depressed. He afterwards admitted the depression he felt, and avowed that he "thought it extremely hazardous to pass a river which is only fordable in one place, march a hundred and fifty miles up the country, and risk a battle, when, if a defeat ensued, not one man would have returned to tell it."

Thus perplexed, he summoned a council of war which decided against passing the river. Clive declared that if he had followed its advice, the result would have been the ruin of the East India Company. It would not, however, have been reasonable on his part to expect the council to come to any other opinion than they did, which was in harmony with his own, a fact which he took unusual pains to let them know before they gave the decision. It is the custom in councils of war for the

junior officer to give his opinion first, so that, uninfluenced by the authority of his seniors, he may express his own conviction. On this occasion Clive first declared his judgment against crossing the river, and so great was his influence that this decision was immediately concurred in, so that in fact it was not a council of war, but the opinion of Clive himself, echoed by his junior officers.

Orme relates that "after the council dispersed, he retired alone into the adjoining grove, where he continued an hour in deep meditation: and gave orders, on his return to his quarters, that the army should cross the river in the morning."\* It is probable that Orme had this account from the lips of Clive himself. The next morning the army crossed the river, and at midnight arrived at Plassey. Before Clive had heard from Meer Jaffier that the soubahdar† had sworn him on the Koran, the faithless general was thus addressed by his English ally, through Mr. Watts, the English resident at the court of Suraj:—"Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left." Meer Jaffier was not brave, and the force of the great English captain was so inferior, that, notwithstanding the mighty name already gained by its commander, Meer Jaffier was discouraged. Had the army of Clive been twice as numerous, the wily Mohammedan would have proved a more prompt ally. Some historians accuse Meer Jaffier of having himself awakened the suspicions of the soubahdar against others of the confederates, that he might, if necessary for his own purposes betray them also, but it is not probable that a politician so timid would venture upon so bold a procedure. The suspicions of the viceroy were actually aroused by M. Law, who was led to suspect the plot, through information connected with the French agents at the court. He consequently urged the prince to retain French troops about his person, but his cowardice and vacillation prevented his following such counsel, for he was afraid of exasperating the English, yet more afraid of offending his own people who were jealous of foreign troops, and he had not implicit confidence in the French themselves.

Before the battle of Plassey was fought, or the little English army had crossed their Rubicon, while yet everything depended upon

\* Vol. ii. p. 170.

† Suraj-ad-Dowlah is called soubahdar and nabob indiscriminately by historians, although the names are not synonymous; a nabob properly being deputy of the soubahdar, as the latter is viceroy of the Mogul.



the privacy with which the conspirators carried on affairs with their English allies, a danger threatened the whole scheme of the most alarming nature. The secret negotiations between Clive and Meer Jaffier, and the ostensible diplomatic business between the council at Calcutta and the soubahdar, were carried on by Mr. Watts, the English resident at his court, and one Omichund, a Bengalee. He had been a merchant at Calcutta, and suffered heavy loss when the place was captured by Suraj, but, finding favour with the tyrant, he was brought to Moorshedabad and compensated for the losses he had sustained. Notwithstanding this unusual generosity on the part of Suraj, Omichund betrayed him. It was convenient both to the soubahdar and the English to have a person of Omichund's parts, experience, and knowledge of the English as a medium of transacting political business, especially as politics and commerce were so interwoven in the relations of the two powers. Omichund was rich, but exceedingly avaricious. He had no honour, no loyalty, and was ready to sell either prince or stranger to the other. He believed that the English could pay the better price, and would in the long run succeed, for he was far-sighted in politics, and a shrewd judge of character. He readily joined the conspirators; for, having a talent for intrigue, he thus found scope for it. Considering the English good paymasters, and more worthy of trust than his master, he was prepared to betray the latter for a price, which was agreed upon amongst the conspirators, and between him and them and the English. He accordingly assisted Mr. Watts in all the plots carried on at the court of Bengal, and was instrumental by his intimate knowledge of Suraj's mental habits and character, and by his own plausible manner and ingenious mind, in soothing the anger of the soubahdar, and lulling his suspicions of his own court, upon which the prince, utterly faithless himself, placed scarcely any reliance. Omichund appears to have gained more influence over him than any of his courtiers, and he wielded it in the interest of the projected revolution.

When all was ready for action, and Clive's little army was committed to the struggle, the mercenary and faithless Bengalee informed Mr. Watts that unless the English consented to pay him, as an additional bribe, the enormous sum—especially in those days, and in the circumstances of the English in Bengal—of three hundred thousand pounds sterling, he would disclose the conspiracy. Clive was appalled by the villainy of the wretch, for he had from the first been one of the most zealous advocates of a revolution, and was the person

through whom the proposals came to the English to aid in effecting that revolution. If the English refused, Mr. Watts, Meer Jaffier, and all concerned, natives or English, in the power of Suraj would be seized and visited with the extreme of torture. It was the opinion of Mr. Watts and of Meer Jaffier that Omichund would certainly fulfil his threat, unless the English gave him such security as satisfied him that he should receive the vast treasure he demanded, which, with his previous demands, would probably reach half a million sterling. Although he had been already compensated by the soubahdar for his losses at Calcutta, he contrived to conceal that fact from the English, and had already obtained a pledge of compensation from them. The committee at Calcutta were paralyzed, but the ready courage and resources of Clive never failed. He undertook the management of this apparently unconquerable danger, and succeeded in satisfying Omichund, so as to secure his silence, and yet of punishing the traitor, so as to deprive him of all for which he had dealt so greedy a bargain. All that Omichund required was accordingly done, without any dissatisfaction with his treachery having been expressed to him, either through the resident Mr. Watts or by direct correspondence. He was treated as if it were natural and proper that he should make the most of his secret, and be a chief sharer in the spoil. This disarmed him of all suspicion that the English had any plan for outwitting him. Supposing that they regarded his conduct as that which any individual among them would himself pursue in like circumstances, he had no doubt that they would, on the score of his treachery, refuse to pay, or promise to be paid by the prospective nabob, all his demands. The security which Omichund sought was an article in a secret treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, conferring upon him all he had required, and he demanded the perusal of the treaty itself. Clive drew up two treaties, one on white paper, the other on red. In the former, which was the real one, no mention was made of Omichund; in the latter, which was fictitious, the payment of his demands was made a stipulation. Lord Macaulay is very severe upon Clive in this instance, in which severity he is supported by nearly every writer of the day who touches this episode of Anglo-Indian conquest.

It is surprising that the conduct of Clive should be denounced so sternly, especially by politicians who uphold deeds far more questionable when a party object of modern times is to be served by so doing. Clive had always intended to act honestly by the perfidious Hindoo, nor had the council at Calcutta ever



for a moment contemplated an injustice to him. He was too useful and powerful to be the object of any meditated treachery by the English; but when they found him false, and that he was about to use the snares he had placed in their hands to catch the nabob for the purpose of their own destruction, they might well throw the meshes over himself. Even, after all, when the English had him at their mercy, they treated him with indulgence.

Before Clive could accomplish his purpose by means of the duplicate treaty, a difficulty arose in consequence of Admiral Watson's refusing to sign the fictitious one. For this the admiral is praised by most writers to the disparagement of Clive, but the admiral had always a point of conscience or of doubt whenever the bold and fertile spirit of Clive presented to him a grand conception or a manly enterprise. Watson had little responsibility beyond keeping his ships safe, driving off those of the enemy, then an easy matter, or bearing troops from one port to another. Upon the presidents and commanders on shore the real responsibility lay, and they often met with embarrassment from the tardy views and want of enterprise on the part of the royal naval commanders. Watson, although an able naval officer, showed no competency beyond that; and was a clog and impediment to the enterprise of Clive. Some of the panegyrists of Watson, whose praise was expended in that direction as indirect censure of Clive, doubt if he ever concurred in the intrigue for the deposition of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, but there is incontestable evidence that he approved of it. If the admiral felt no qualm of conscience in carrying on an intrigue with Omichund to dethrone his sovereign, thus countenancing, on the part of the wily Hindoo, treachery which admitted of no apology or palliation, it is strange that his conscience should become so tender when an expedient such as Clive resorted to, as a *protection against treachery*, was presented for his opinion. Probably if any other member of the council but Clive had contrived the subtle trick, Watson might have admired its ingenuity, and have considered it an appropriate mode, under the circumstances, of snatching from the hands of a double traitor the reward he had so ingeniously determined to clutch. One may fairly suppose this of the admiral when perusing his correspondence with Clive, expressing his good wishes for the success of a conspiracy which could only prosper by the English assenting to the treachery of Omichund against his own master. However influenced, Watson refused to sign the red treaty. Macaulay says that Clive forged his signature. Mill throws the imputation upon the whole com-

mittee. At all events, the treaty was presented in such form as to deceive the Hindoo, with all the sagacity for which Orme gives him credit. After the battle of Plassey and the triumphant progress of Clive through Bengal, Omichund was undeceived, and he found that his perfidy had overreached itself, and that in Clive he had encountered an intellect as subtle as his own. As this episode in British Indian history has given rise to much controversy, especially since the days of Mill, it will interest the reader to place before him the bitter animadversion of that writer, and the calm and candid reply to it of Professor Wilson. All the accusations against Clive and the council, from the days of Mill to Macaulay, are presented in brief in the following note to Mill's history:—"Among the Hindoo merchants established at Calcutta was Omichund, 'a man,' says Mr. Orme, 'of great sagacity and understanding,' who had traded to a vast amount, and acquired an enormous fortune. 'The extent of his habitation,' continues Mr. Orme, 'divided into various departments, the number of his servants continually employed in various occupations, and a retinue of armed men in constant pay, resembled more the state of a prince than the condition of a merchant. His commerce extended to all parts of Bengal and Bahar, and by presents and services he had acquired so much influence with the principal officers of the Bengal government, that the presidency, in times of difficulty, used to employ his mediation with the nabob. This pre-eminence, however, did not fail to render him the object of much envy.'† When the alarm, excited by the hostile designs of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, threw into consternation the minds of Mr. Drake and his council, among other weak ideas which occurred to them, one was to secure the person of Omichund, lest, peradventure, he should be in concert with their enemies. He was seized and thrown into confinement. His guards, believing that violence, that is, dishonour, would next fall upon his house, set fire to it, after the manner of Hindoos, and slaughtered the inmates of his harem. Notwithstanding this, when Mr. Holwell endeavoured to parley with the nabob, he employed Omichund to write letters to his friends, importuning them to intercede, in that extremity, with the prince. At the capture, though his person was liberated, his valuable effects and merchandise were plundered. No less than four hundred thousand rupces in cash were found in his treasury. When an order was published that such of the English as had escaped the Black Hole might

\* Vol. iii. book iv. chap. iii. p. 135.

† Orme, vol. ii. p. 50.



return to their homes, they were supplied with provisions by Omichund, 'whose intercession,' says Orme, 'had probably procured their return.' Omichund, upon the ruin of Calcutta, followed the nabob's army, and soon acquired a high degree of confidence both with the nabob's favourite and with himself. After the recovery of Calcutta, when the nabob, alarmed at the attack of his camp, entered into negotiation and concluded a treaty, Omichund was one of the principal agents employed. And when Mr. Watts was sent to Moorshedabad as agent at the durbar (court) of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, 'he was accompanied,' says Mr. Orme (ii. 137), 'by Omichund, whose conduct in the late negotiation had effaced the impression of former imputations, insomuch that Mr. Watts was permitted to consult and employ him without reserve on all occasions.' He was employed as a main instrument in all the intrigues with Jaffier. It was never surmised that he did not second, with all his efforts, the projects of the English; it was never denied that his services were of the utmost importance. Mr. Orme says expressly (p. 182), that 'his tales and artifices prevented Suraj-ad-Dowlah from believing the representations of his most trusty servants, who early suspected, and at length were convinced, that the English were confederated with Jaffier.' When the terms of compensation for the losses sustained by the capture of Calcutta were negotiated between Mr. Watts and Meer Jaffier, three millions of rupees were set down to Omichund, which, considering the extent of his property, and that 'most of the best houses in Calcutta were his,'\* was probably not more than his loss. Looking forward to the rewards, which he doubted not that Jaffier, if successful, would bestow upon those of the English who were the chief instruments of his exaltation; estimating also the importance of his own services, and the risk, both of life and of fortune, which, in rendering those services, he had incurred, Omichund conceived that he too might put in his claim for reward; and, according to the example of his countrymen, resolved not to injure himself by the modesty of his demand. He asked a commission of five per cent. on the money which should be received from the nabob's treasury, and a fourth part of the jewels; but agreed, upon hearing the objections of Mr. Watts, to refer his claims to the committee. When the accounts were sent to Calcutta, the sum to be given to Omichund, even as compensation for his losses, seemed a very heavy grievance to men who panted for more to themselves. To men whose minds were in such a state, the great

demands of Omichund appeared (the reader will laugh—but they did literally appear) a crime. They were voted a crime; and so great a crime as to deserve to be punished—to be punished, not only by depriving him of all reward, but depriving him of his compensation, that compensation which was stipulated for to everybody: it was voted that Omichund should have nothing. They were in his power; however, therefore he was not to be irritated. It was necessary he should be deceived. Clive, whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang, proposed that two treaties with Meer Jaffier should be drawn up, and signed, one, in which satisfaction to Omichund should be provided for, which Omichund should see; another, that which should really be executed, in which he should not be named. To his honour be it spoken, Admiral Watson refused to be a party in this treachery. He would not sign the false treaty; and the committee forged his name. When Omichund, upon the final adjustment, was told that he was cheated, and found that he was a ruined man, he fainted away, and lost his reason. He was from that moment insane. Not an Englishman, not even Mr. Orme, has yet expressed a word of sympathy or regret."

To this Professor Wilson replies:—"In this statement some very material circumstances are omitted, which palliate, if they do not justify the deception that was practised. Before the attack upon Calcutta, Omichund was in friendly correspondence with the ministers and servants of the nawab, and upon its being taken, was treated with civility by Suraj-ad-Dowlah, whom he accompanied to Moorshedabad, and there obtained from him repayment of the money which in the plunder of Calcutta had been carried off from his house. Notwithstanding this, he was one of the first, through his connection, no doubt, with the Hindoo ministers, and Sets, the banker, to engage in the plot against Suraj-ad-Dowlah. The English had, therefore, no great reason to look upon him as their friend; and as it is evident that he was a stranger to every principle except love of money, there is nothing in his character to awaken any sympathy for his fate. Still it is undeniable that thus far he merited no treachery, and that his services were entitled to consideration. It was intended to reimburse his losses and remunerate his assistance; but his want of principle instigated him to enrich himself by the secret to which he had been admitted, and when all was prepared for action, he waited on Mr. Watts, the agent at Cossimbazar, and threatened to acquaint the nawab with the conspiracy, unless a donation was secured to him of thirty lacs of rupees, about £350,000. The demand was

\* Orme, vol. ii. p. 128.



exorbitant, and infinitely beyond the amount of any losses he could have sustained by the plunder of Calcutta, for which losses also, it is to be remembered, he had already received compensation. Mr. Mill thinks it probably not more than his loss, because the best houses in Calcutta, according to Orme, were his. But admitting that they were of great value, which is not very likely, they were still his. Calcutta was not razed to the ground; the buildings were still there, and on its recapture had of course reverted to their owners. The claim was wholly inadmissible, and its unreasonableness was aggravated by the threat of treachery with which it was enforced. What was to be done? To have rejected it at once would have been followed by the certain murder of the company's servants at Cossimbazar, and of Meer Jaffier, with all his family and adherents, and by the probable defeat of the British projects and their destruction. The menaced treason of Omichund, and its fatal consequences, are scarcely adverted to in the preceding account, although it was that, and not the mere demand of extravagant compensation, which was naturally enough denounced by the committee as a crime, and determined to be worthy of punishment. Clive, who had all along advocated his cause, and defended his character, 'received with equal surprise and indignation the incontrovertible proofs offered of his guilt. Viewing him as a public enemy, he considered, as he stated at the period, and publicly avowed afterwards, every artifice that could deceive him to be not only defensible, but just and proper.' There may be a difference of opinion on this subject, and it would have been more for the credit of the European character that, however treacherously extorted, the promise should have been performed, the money should have been paid; but there can be no doubt that, in order to appreciate with justice the conduct of Clive and the committee, the circumstance of Omichund's menaced treason should not be kept out of sight. As to the reputed effects of his disappointment upon his intellects and life, there is good reason to doubt their occurrence, for in the month of August following, Clive recommends him to the secret committee of the court of directors, as 'a person capable of rendering great services, and, therefore, not wholly to be discarded.'"\*

The opinion of Professor Wilson is subscribed by many persons of eminence in connection with India, as the author of this history has means of knowing. In the esteem of others equally eminent, the learned

Professor conceded too much as to the ethical impropriety of refusing the demand of Omichund when victory crowned the English arms. Such men as Elphinstone, Prinsep, &c., among the most competent authorities to pronounce an opinion on Indian affairs, take this view. Upon some of the severer attacks of Mill, Lord Macaulay himself, sufficiently severe, has made the following strictures:—"We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man 'to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang.' Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the opposite of a knave, bold even to temerity, sincere even to indiscretion, hearty in friendship, open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen, from his boxing-matches in school to those stormy altercations in the India-house, and in parliament, amidst which his later years were passed, his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been, that he considered oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour, with men who would give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame, with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between oriental and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined, most erroneously in our opinion, that he could effect nothing against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free; if he went on telling the truth, and hearing none; if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly, this man, in the other parts of his life an honourable English gentleman and a soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer, than he became himself an Indian intriguer, and descended, without scruple, to falsehood, to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands."

\* See *Life of Clive*, vol. i. p. 289.



Lord Macaulay does justice to Clive in the above quotation, so far as he complains of Mill's unqualified denunciation; but, however plausibly expressed, the remainder of the passage is a reply to the former portion. The mode adopted to explain the contradictions in the separate parts of Clive's life is, like most of his lordship's casuistry, ingenious and imposing; but it is not founded upon facts. The description given of Clive's ideas of the necessity of descending into an arena of fraud, and playing a part there appropriate to the position, when in competition with native diplomatists, was never avowed, and, it may be fearlessly said, was never entertained by Clive. Lord Macaulay is indebted to his own dexterous fancy for this mode of reconciling what he describes as the discrepant parts of Clive's life. There was no such discrepancy of character in the man. He would outwit a thief, by setting a trap for him, or pretending to connive at his villainy until the moment of arresting him arrived. He would countervail the diabolical treachery of a man like Omichund, in whose hands the fate of himself and of his country's interests lay, by appearing to acquiesce in his demands, and turning his own tricks into pitfalls for himself; but he would not substitute documents, forge names, or resort to dishonourable averments, in order to carry a point in diplomacy, deceive a confiding and faithful ally, accomplish a scheme of personal aggrandizement, or achieve any object in itself either corrupt or virtuous. He did not hold the principle of doing evil that good might come, as applicable to oriental politics; but he believed all means lawful to escape the clutches of an assassin and robber. He regarded Suraj-ad-Dowlah in no better light, and therefore entered into alliance with a revolutionary party in that sovereign's dominions, which had plotted the deposition of their tyrant. He regarded Omichund as a man who played the part of a foul traitor, who would have given up Clive's countrymen and allies to massacre, if demands, which the English could not have complied with in justice to themselves or their allies, were not apparently acquiesced in. He considered the promise he made like that which a man makes when the knife of a highwayman is at his throat, and he acted as most men would act when such a danger must be eluded. Had there been other passages in Clive's Indian career bringing out such principles and motives as Lord Macaulay attributes to him, there would be propriety in viewing the transactions with Omichund as his lordship represents them, in reference to the motives and principles by which they were governed; but there is no evidence in the facts of Clive's Eastern career

to sustain the theory by which Lord Macaulay accounts for his conduct. His lordship, at the time he wrote his review of Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, had evidently not made himself thoroughly acquainted with its contents, nor had he, from other sources, placed before his mind the Indian career of Lord Clive as a whole—military, diplomatic, and administrative. There is sufficient in each department of Clive's Indian history to prove that he never regarded what was false and dishonourable in Europe as otherwise in Asia. To deceive an enemy in war or diplomacy, when that enemy obviously intended treachery, he considered fair; and the same course has been pursued in European warfare and diplomacy so often as to make it absurd to single Clive out for indignation. He did wrong, as other generals and statesmen do, from allowing the aims he had in view—aims in themselves right—to blind his judgment, and from the errors and passions incidental to human judgment and feeling, under circumstances of temptation and peril; but he did not place himself on a level with oriental politicians in matters of principle and honour, and justify himself in the adoption of one standard of morality in India and another in England.

Such were the intrigues which preceded the battle of Plassey, an account of which is indispensable in a correct narrative of the conquest of Bengal by the British, for they influenced all the results of that victory.

These events passed rapidly on while Clive was preparing for his expedition, and after he set out on his march. Before he reached Plassey he sent a message to the soubahdar, setting forth the treasons in which his highness had been detected, and the wrongs inflicted on the British. Clive offered to refer these disputes to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, and meantime he and his army would wait upon his highness for an answer. Arrived at Plassey, Clive took up his position on the skirt of a grove of mango trees about two miles square\*—one of those groves of fruit-trees so extensively planted by the natives in India. Near to Plassey there had been an intrenched camp of the soubahdar, and the evening previous to the arrival of Clive, Suraj-ad-Dowlah himself, with the main body of his army, arrived. These forces, united to the troops in camp, constituted a large army. It is difficult to state the precise number. Orme, who was there, represents the infantry as fifty thousand, the cavalry eighteen thousand, and fifty pieces of cannon. Lord Macaulay states the infantry to have been forty thousand in number, the cavalry fifteen thousand, and

\* This grove is still in existence, but greatly reduced in dimensions.



the artillery the same as in Orme's computation, with the addition of a few field-pieces belonging to the French, and worked by them. Clive himself, in his letter to the directors, estimated the forces of the enemy still lower, representing the infantry as thirty-five thousand, and the cavalry and artillery as of the same force named by Lord Macaulay. With these forces were all the chief generals of Bengal, and among them Meer Jaffier, whose heart failed him when the hour for forming a junction with Clive arrived. The force which Clive had to oppose to this huge army was three thousand men; of these about one thousand were British, one hundred topasses, and the rest sepoys. All were commanded by British officers, some of them, such as Eyre Coote, men of distinguished ability; and the whole of the troops were well disciplined.

Clive passed an anxious night, pacing to and fro in the mango grove, or pondering in his tent; for he knew that the morrow must decide the destinies of Bengal, of its ruler, of himself and his little army, and of the English in Eastern India. All night he heard the din and bustle of an oriental camp, and felt the influence of the peculiar murmuring sound which the voices and motions of a host on the eve of battle were calculated to produce. His opponent spent also a night of anxiety; he had cast the issue of dominion upon the tide of war, and the morning's light would reveal whether his fortune would ebb or flow. He was naturally distrustful, and the apprehensions attendant upon such a condition of mind were heightened by the belief that treason lurked within his lines. By some misconduct, guards were not posted at his tent during a portion of the night, and a wandering camp follower, not knowing whither he strayed, found himself in the monarch's tent, who, apprehensive of assassination, cried aloud with fear, spreading alarm among his chiefs.

The host of the despot was not eager for battle—no loyalty kindled enthusiasm, and the troops of Meer Jaffier were alienated, considering themselves bound only to the chief whose salt they eat. The name of Clive was itself a spell, which palsied the heart of many of the vaunting braves of the ostentatious ranks of Suraj. Many of Clive's officers, perhaps all, were more confident of success than Clive himself. They had trust in his genius and valour. He felt the tremendous responsibility of his position—a bullet or an arrow might lay him low, and the mere fact of his fall would cause despair among his sepoys, and inspire the enemy with confidence.

The sepoys of Clive's force felt no misgivings—they invested their leader with super-

human gifts, and expected to see some new phase of his power, before which the great host of the viceroy would disappear, as fallen branches and foliage swept onward by the inundations of the Ganges. The European soldiers were not confident of victory, but were resolute to deserve it. They looked wistfully forth for the eastern dawn to break. That dawn at last arose upon the unslumbering expectants of the conflict, and the battle of Plassey began, June 23, 1757.

Few native armies have appeared to the British so picturesque as that which advanced against the mango grove and the sheltering banks by which Clive's little band stood waiting for the onset. The infantry of Suraj was variously armed—some in the style of ancient India, others carried the weapons of European warfare. The bowmen formed their lines, as those of Cressy or Poitiers; but the turbaned heads and flowing drapery of these Eastern archers were far more picturesque. The musketeers carried their dusky weapons with less propriety and grace, and as men less skilful with their weapons. Many a line of swords and shields flashed in the morning's ray, and the sheen of lances displayed the pomp and reality of war.

The most singular sight presented to the British was the artillery. The guns were not only numerous but of heavy metal; they were all drawn by beautiful white oxen, whose movements were far more rapid than European nations would think likely with such animals yoked to field artillery. Behind every gun an elephant, well trained for the purpose, added to the celerity of the movement, by pushing with his great strength. These creatures were gaily caparisoned, and were magnificent specimens of their kind. The cavalry were mounted upon fine horses from upper Hindostan, Affghanistan, and Central Asia. The men of all the force, especially of the cavalry, were fine specimens of the well-formed, tall statured soldiers of Upper Bengal.

Forth came the brilliant host. Firm and undaunted the little band of British heroes awaited their approach. The enemy, instead of advancing to close combat, halted, and opened a heavy fire of cannon; but so badly were the guns worked, that scarcely a shot told. The light French field-pieces were skilfully directed, but were not brought into sufficient play, the native leaders relying upon the great execution they expected to be made by their own ponderous ordnance.

The English artillery replied with considerable effect, disabling the enemy's cannon by killing or alarming the oxen and elephants, and throwing the native gunners into conse-



quent confusion. It was, however, to silence the efficient French pieces, which were served as gallantly as skilfully, that the English fire was chiefly directed.

The army of Suraj wasted time upon a fruitless cannonade, during which several of the best officers fell by the well-directed aim of the English gunners. At last Meer Meden, a general upon whom his highness placed the utmost reliance, and whose fidelity deserved the esteem in which he was held, received a mortal wound from a cannon-ball. He was borne to the tent of his highness, who avoided danger, and while the faithful officer explained the arrangements by which he supposed victory might be gained, he expired. Suraj, frantic with despair and grief, called for Meer Jaffier, whose troops remained in a species of armed neutrality on one flank of the soubahdar's line. Suraj took off his turban, and placed it at Meer Jaffier's feet—the most abject act of humiliation to which a Mussulman can stoop; he implored him to avenge the death of the faithful Meer Meden, and to rescue from the perils that beset him the grandson of Ali Verdi, by whose favour Jaffier had grown great.

The conspirator, unmoved by Suraj's tears or humiliation, turned the moment to account, and advised him to retreat to the intrenchments. Another general officer, Mohan Lall, pointed out the certain destruction which must ensue if such counsel were followed; but the helpless Suraj gave the fatal order. While one portion of the army consequently made a retrograde movement, that commanded by Meer Jaffier remained stationary. Clive perceived the true state of the case, and ordered his whole force to advance, the 39th British regiment of infantry leading, with imposing line and dauntless bearing. Suraj, dull as he was, understood at a glance the inaction of Meer Jaffier, and the well-timed advance of Clive. He fled. Mounting a swift camel, attended by two thousand of his choicest cavalry, he forsook the field. Meer Jaffier drew off his troops from the line of battle. The rest of the multitude took to precipitate flight, casting away their arms. The French, with a gallantry beyond praise, endeavoured to rally the panic-stricken crowd in vain, and alone faced the advancing English; but as the alarm and rout of their allies increased, the French were swept from the field, as the mountain rock borne downward by the avalanche; and these brave men were merged in the crowd, whose mad flight bore everything before it. The battle was over; the Bengalees fled without feeling the point of British steel. The pursuit was short but decisive; five hundred of the enemy perished,

but they fell chiefly under the good artillery practice of the English. Of the British, only seventy-two were put *hors de combat*; and of these only twenty-two were slain: scarcely as many were mortally wounded.

The 39th regiment was the most conspicuous portion of Clive's troops—it still bears the name of Plassey on its colours, and is proud of the motto, "*Primus in Indis*."

Lord Macaulay says, "Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action, but when he saw the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and when the battle was over sent his congratulations to his ally." This statement is astonishingly inaccurate. It is true that Meer Jaffier did not come over with his troops, which would have been difficult, but his treachery mainly conduced to the victory. There is no knowing how the battle would have issued, considering the disparity of forces, and the skill and bravery shown by the French, even with inactivity on the part of Jaffier's troops, if that officer had not given the fatal advice to the soubahdar to order a retreat to the trenches. When the retreat commenced, he remained stationary, but in such manner as betrayed his object so palpably that the prince immediately fled in despair, taking with him the *élite* of his army. Meer Jaffier accomplished all that his letter to Clive had promised. It was found after the battle, that while the cannonade was playing, he sent a letter to Clive advising the English chief to charge, and promising at that moment to withdraw his troops, which was probably all he could entrust his own soldiers to perform. The perfidy of Jaffier was the real cause of success; but for his assistance it is doubtful whether Clive would have brought away his little force from the field, far less was there a chance of victory. No battle fought by Clive gained him so much glory and emolument, in no battle in which he ever engaged did the issue result less from any performance of his. It was the only battle in the preliminaries of which he showed hesitation, not merely hesitation of judgment, but want of confidence in his resources and his fortune, and the only one in which his chief reliance lay rather in the perfidy of a portion of the army opposed to him than in his own genius and the heroism of his troops. He doubtless did all that man could do in his circumstances, and everything he accomplished was performed well. The explanations between the two chiefs were mutually satisfactory. Clive urged Jaffier to hasten to Moorsshedabad (then the capital of Bengal), and prevent the possibility of Suraj rallying his forces, or



raising fresh levies. The revolutionary nabob followed this counsel and hastened forward. Meanwhile, the fugitive prince continued his flight to his capital. There, in a paroxysm of fear, he consulted all his courtiers, and followed the advice of none. Some urged him to surrender to the English, and throw himself on their mercy, as they were generous and relenting, as well as daring in war. Others appealed to his manhood and kingly pride, advising that he should assemble all that were faithful to him, place himself at their head, and fall upon the enemy, dying sword in hand or reconquering dominion and retrieving honour. His poltroon spirit shrunk from the manly counsel. A few advised him to place himself in the hands of the French in the Deccan, and to await the return of the tide of fortune to that nation, which they perceived would soon flow again, when he would be restored by their power, as they would always be the foes of a nabob friendly to the English. This counsel pleased him most, but was least popular among his friends. His indecision could resolve upon none of these schemes, until no course remained for his coward heart to choose but ignominious flight once more. Meer Jaffier followed fast upon the fugitive, and when the besieging nabob entered Moorshedabad, Suraj was let down from a window of his palace. Accompanied, according to Orme, by one of his favourite concubines and two attendants, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he entered a boat and rowed for Patna. Native writers describe his retreat as more leisurely, and having a train of elephants to bear his family and treasures. Clive arrived in a few days afterwards with a large escort, leaving his little army behind. He was received with great deference by Meer Jaffier and his confederates. A palace was assigned to the English captain, surrounded by beautiful grounds, and where there was camping accommodation for five hundred men, the number of his soldiers who accompanied him. The installation of Meer Jaffier as nabob of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa was his first care. He led the new ruler to the throne or chair of state, made the customary offerings, congratulated him on his exaltation, and then, through his interpreter, addressed the people, calling upon them to rejoice over the downfall of a tyrant, and the accession to power of a virtuous ruler.

The next care of the British chief was to demand from the regnant nabob the fulfilment of the treaty made during the period that the conspiracy was in progress. Up to this period, Omichund was ignorant of the artifice of the double treaty, and he presented himself

in high spirits, to obtain the sum, promise of which he had exacted under the threat of betraying the English to the viceroy. Mr. Sraffton was ordered by Clive to undeceive him; the result has been related on a former page.

Meer Jaffier did his best to carry out the terms of the treaty, and disburse the sums which he had contracted to pay; but the treasury of Moorshedabad was far from full. The desolating wars carried on with the Mah-rattas by the predecessors of Suraj, the military expenditure of that prince against the English, and his profligate waste in the excesses and extravagance to which he was addicted, had, rich as Bengal was, reduced the treasury to a low degree. By various expedients, such as the disposal of jewels and making part payment in jewels, Meer Jaffier made up a portion of the money, and engaged, at certain intervals, to pay further instalments until the debt was liquidated. More than three quarters of a million sterling in coined silver was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Calcutta. One hundred of the river boats were employed to convey the precious freight. The flotilla was conducted with much display—flags flying, drums beating, fireworks, brilliant as those of Bengal usually are, testified the satisfaction of the English, and the dissimulation of the courtiers of the new nabob, who regarded with horror and alarm the removal of so much treasure. It was remarkable that much of the coinage was European of an old date—such as the Venetians used when that people conducted the trade between Europe and India.

Clive was the object of adulation and homage such as can be rendered only by orientals. Presents of the most costly nature were lavished upon him. His temptations were great, and, although his share of the disbursements connected with the treaty was very large, his moderation was conspicuous: he literally walked between heaps of gold and silver, and piles of precious stones, in the treasury of Moorshedabad. He might have appropriated what he pleased: he was invited—even urged, to do so, probably with no sincerity, but it was the interest of the party of the revolution to gratify him, for he had been the only Englishman in Bengal capable of bringing it to pass. Calcutta witnessed a great accession of wealth: the company profited by the political and territorial advantages won by Clive's genius; the company's officers were enriched by the gifts. The craven creatures of the council of Calcutta, who had fled before the name of Suraj Dowlah, in the transactions which issued in such stupendous results, were as grasping as



they were cowardly. They ruined English interests in Bengal; they impeded Clive in his gigantic efforts to retrieve them; they envied, hated, and feared him, and, while jealous of his renown, and indifferent to the glory of their country's arms, they were ready to take to themselves the credit of wisdom and statesmanship for what was effected, and considered no amount of money which they could appropriate sufficient for their services.

While the revolution bore Meer Jaffier to a throne, sent the treasures of Moorshedabad to Fort William, and spread terror of the name of Clive and of the English all over India, it brought new and fatal calamities upon him whose shameless cupidity and iron oppression provoked it. The fugitive Suraj was betrayed by a Hindoo whose family he had oppressed, and brought back to Moorshedabad a few days after his flight, while yet his treasures loaded the galleys on the river, and the English were celebrating their success with festivity, music, and Bengal lights. The English drums beat merrily, and the coruscations of the fireworks rendered the sky lurid, as the captive prince, shorn of his glory, no man so mean as to do him homage, was borne to the footstool of him who had once feared his frown. Meer Jaffier resolved, or pretended to resolve, upon consigning the unfortunate prince to a humane and even luxurious captivity. But the new nabob had a son, a youth of seventeen, as ferocious as Suraj himself, and as despicable a coward. This aspirant for the honours of an Indian Mohammedan throne murdered the captive while under the guardianship of his father's honour. Such were the Mohammedan princes and rulers of India—*semper eadem*—changeless in their sanguinary treachery and despotism to the last. Meer Jaffier became uneasy lest this

tragedy should incense his masters, which the English virtually were, and his protestations and apologies were profuse. Clive was indignant at this brutality; but the council at Calcutta, while expressing their horror of the deed, had no pity for its victim, and would not trouble themselves to demand any investigation into the matter. Thus perished Suraj-ad-Dowlah, under circumstances of striking retribution. He had, by his oppressions and wrongs, driven his chief general into rebellion, and suffered in turn the most cruel indignities and punishment from him. He had caused, or at least occasioned, the murder of Englishmen, under circumstances the most inhuman and revolting, in a room at Calcutta; through the instrumentality of the English, he became himself a captive, and suffered a fate similar to that he had permitted to go unpunished, if he did not directly inflict.

The new nabob lived and moved under the control of the English: the council at Calcutta reigned—he administered. The vast and rich regions of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa lay at the feet of the company. Regions more extensive, and abounding in more natural wealth than all western Europe, were expanded before the power and enterprise of the adventurous strangers. They began their career of arms in a naval battle at Surat, in which, against odds the most deterring, they bore away victory, astonishing and filling the native mind with admiration: they had now, at Plassey, achieved a victory on land as signally, closing that portion of their career which they had fulfilled in the subjugation of the largest and richest provinces of India to their dictation. Yet they were destined to enter upon new phases in their Indian political existence, and to tread new paths of greatness and of glory.

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

OPPOSITION TO THE SOUBAHDARSHIP OF MEER JAFFIER—INTRIGUES OF THE NABOB OF OUDE, AND OTHER NATIVE PRINCES, INSTIGATED BY THE FRENCH—INVASION OF BENGAL BY THE DUTCH, AND THEIR DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION BY COLONEL FORD—INVASION OF BENGAL BY SHAH-ZADA—HIS REPULSE AND FLIGHT—DEFEAT OF THE NAIB OF POORANIA BY CAPTAIN KNOX—DEATH OF THE HEIR OF THE SOUBAHDAR BY LIGHTNING, AND CONSEQUENT TERMINATION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

THE glorious issue of Clive's short campaign, and the rejoicings at Moorshedabad and Calcutta, were the immediate preludes of further troubles. M. Law had hastened to the succour of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, when that prince requested his presence for the defence of Bengal. Having, however, received infor-

mation of the battle of Plassey, he halted until further intelligence should reach him from Suraj.\* He soon learned from other sources

\* "Had he immediately proceeded twenty miles further, he would, the next day, have met and saved Suraj Dowlah, and an order of events very different from those which we have to relate would have ensued."—*Orme*, vol. ii. p. 185.



that all was lost, and that assistance from him was impossible. A part of Clive's army, under the gallant and skilful Coote, hung upon the rear of the enemy, compelling them to retire from Bengal. The French abandoned all thought of directly interfering with English policy in that province, but still hoped to thwart it through the government of Oude and the court of the Mogul.

While various intrigues were conducted in that quarter, Meer Jaffier found his newly-attained power rest heavily upon him. According to some writers he was unwilling, when the moment for assuming regal state arrived, to take upon him the dignity, and Clive was obliged to use gentle force, and something more, to cause his protégé to go through the ceremony of installation. Other writers aver that this was only a well-acted scene between the two principal performers, to which the other actors were accessories without penetrating the motives of the chiefs.

Meer Jaffier was scarcely left to himself a week after the withdrawal of Clive from Moorshedabad, before he discovered that many of the zemindars were unwilling to recognise his title, that portions of his army were mutinous, that his chief civil functionaries were disgusted by the large sums withdrawn from the treasury by the English, and that most of the chief persons in his province were reluctant to acknowledge a soubahdar who derived his appointment, not from the grand Mogul, but a foreign conqueror.

Meer Jaffier made the exhaustion of his treasury by the English a ground for levying further taxes, and at the same time for neither paying his troops nor civil functionaries. Most English writers maintain that his treasury was really exhausted, and that those who placed him on the "musnid" deprived him of the means of government. Continental writers, especially French, persist in alleging that he outwitted the British, the latter never suspecting there was an inner treasury within the zenana, where eight crores of rupees, equivalent to eight millions sterling, were stowed away. They bring plausible proofs for this assertion from documents possessed by M. Law, the statements of natives of influence at the court of Moorshedabad, and the fact that the widow of Meer Jaffier was ultimately possessed of enormous wealth, to be accounted for on no other supposition than that of a reserved treasury, of which the English had neither knowledge nor suspicion. Clive knew so little of the habits of oriental courts, that, notwithstanding his strong sense, he might in such a matter be deceived.

The disaffection of Meer Jaffier's army rapidly increased; the atrocities and tyranny

of Suraj-ad-Dowlah appeared to be forgotten in the universal pity excited by his assassination, and abhorrence of the perpetrator. Besides, Suraj, in his better moments, was capable of kindness, and he made politic use of that parade and pomp so necessary in an Eastern prince. His person was regal and imposing, although his intellect was weak. He was but twenty-five years of age when assassinated, and, according to native historians, his features were regular, and his countenance expressed much sweetness. If this last assertion be a fact, it controverts the theories of physiognomists, who describe the countenances of men as expressing the habitual passions and emotions: there is evidence enough to prove that those of Suraj were cruelty, avarice, and sensuality. The soldiery and people of Moorshedabad, however, made comparisons between the deposed prince and the deposer, to the disadvantage of the latter in many, if not in all respects; and the increase of insubordination and disaffection soon awakened Meer Jaffier to a sense of the insecurity of his newly acquired throne. Hence arose a new source of uneasiness to the governor of Calcutta.

No plots of the French, of the Nabob of Oude, of the Mogul emperor, or of any other aspirant to power, did so much to weaken the government of Meer Jaffier as the conduct of himself and his son, Meeran. The former sunk into contemptible sloth, disgracing the "musnid" by incessant intoxication. His son, Meeran, was full of youth and energy, and his vigour was employed in every description of wickedness, which his father, and the Begum (his mother), who were devotedly attached to him, not only tolerated but encouraged. Assassinations as ruthless as that of Suraj-ad-Dowlah were frequently perpetrated by him. His father had been indebted for everything to Ali Verdi Khan, yet the princesses, the granddaughters of that monarch, were murdered by him, on the pretence that it was necessary to get rid of the disloyal, if he would enjoy repose. The infant brother and infant nephew of Suraj-ad-Dowlah were also murdered by him in a manner as coarse as it was cruel. The Mohammedan people were not averse to the bloody deeds of Meeran, so long as they were directed to supposed or ostensible enemies. Sympathising in their own minds with bloodshed, they were gratified by the execution of rich Hindoos, especially such as held any confidential communication with the English, and many such suffered in their persons or properties, and not a few were slain. Meeran was the chief support of Meer Jaffier. The whole family of Suraj Dowlah was seized. His widow, mother,



daughter, aunt, and an adopted boy, were seized at midnight, with seventy persons of inferior note: all of the latter were drowned, and some of the former; but it has never been clearly ascertained which were destroyed and which sent back to prison.

The feeling between Meer Jaffier and the British was very bad, and that between his son and them much more hostile. The British soon regarded the successor of Suraj-ad-Dowlah as no better than that unfortunate prince. He governed his people badly, showed that he regarded the English alliance as merely a convenience, and that as soon as he could throw it off he would. Meeran openly declared his hatred of it, and was in constant fear of being seized by Clive as an open enemy. The young prince was ready to join any enterprise, however hazardous, not involving the exposure of his own person to danger, that afforded the slightest hope of driving the English out of Bengal. Of these things the English were early apprised, and directed their measures accordingly. Clive soon regarded his protégé with distrust and dislike, and young Meeran with aversion. He began to vindicate the final assumption, on the part of the company, of the soubahdars of Bengal. Other enterprising English officials entertained similar views. Clive declared that the Prince Meeran could not be allowed to ascend the throne of the nabob, as was originally stipulated with Meer Jaffier, because of his hatred to the English. By degrees, Clive and all the British came to the conclusion that the sooner the nabob himself ceased to reign, the better for English security and the good government of Bengal.

The relations of the English and the nabob were complicated by the general supervision which the former exercised in government affairs. They considered themselves the real masters of Bengal, and Meer Jaffier as virtually a minister to carry out their wishes. The nabob could with less difficulty be brought to regard his position in that light, than his turbulent and tyrannical son, his soldiery, or his people. When the British remonstrated with Meeran for the murder of the mother of Suraj-ad-Dowlah, whom many writers believe to have been at the time alive, the prince did not deny the deed, as these writers allege he might have done, but inquired with astonishment, rage, and grief, "What! can I not kill an old woman that goes about in her dooly to excite the zemindars against my father?" He was indignant that the English should assume the right to interfere in such cases. They were without the power to interfere efficiently. They might denounce the atrocities and robberies perpe-

trated by the reigning nabob and his son, but could not prevent them. The remonstrances and even threats of the English only caused them to be more hated without being obeyed. The people and troops of the nabob, not conscious of the sources of British power, considered the perpetual interference of the English agents as the result of the nabob's weakness, whom they hated for allowing the infidels to dictate to the followers of the true faith. Such was the general state of the relations of the parties whose alliance promised so much and effected so little for the welfare of Eastern India, the quietness of the English settlements, and the prosperity of the English trade. Individual Englishmen of influence and authority realized vast riches, but the company found that the increase of its wealth by the alliance with Meer Jaffier, in one way or another, increased its expenses. In consequence of Clive's representations of the brilliant success achieved, and the vast advantages realized by the events of 1757, the company resolved to send out no more money for two years; but, in their correspondence, stated that the treasures deposited at Calcutta should provide for the entire expenses of the three presidencies, and also furnish the investments for the Chinese trade. The opinion of the company that the results of the Bengal conquest should be sufficient for such purposes was reasonable, although the mode in which they attempted to carry out such a decision, in the face of the state of things existing in the Carnatic, the rapid revolutions and sanguinary wars which prevailed at this time in India among princes and Europeans, was absurd.

In this condition of affairs Clive was the overruling genius by which order was preserved, while all around was sinking into chaos. He was considered by the English as the only officer who could keep Meer Jaffier to his engagements, and awe his son Meeran. Meer Jaffier regarded him as his only reliance amidst a mutinous army, seditious people, and intriguing neighbours in Oude, Agra, and Delhi; with any or all of whom the French were ever ready to form an alliance. Meeran considered him as the tyrant of himself and his father, and the only man who stood between the family of the nabob and the exercise of unlimited power to rob and kill all who withheld what they demanded, or resisted their tyranny and caprice. Lord Macaulay describes Clive's relations to all parties thus:—"Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which placed him on it. . . . The recent revolutions had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new nabob.



The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While this state of things existed, a ship arrived with despatches which had been written at the India-house, before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the authority of disobeying these preposterous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented, and it soon appeared that the servants of the company only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their settlements in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the south of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. . . . It is but justice to say, that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition to the track lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this track the French still had the ascendancy; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was entrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.\*

Meer Jaffier's dubious relation to the English, and the still more doubtful position of his idolized son, were not his only, and scarcely even his chief difficulties. He had scarcely mounted the throne, and felt himself at once in possession of the treasures, and surrounded by the intrigues of French, Oudean, and Bengalee zemindars, as stated in the first pages of this chapter, before he was obliged to prepare against the invasion of his dominions by a competitor for his throne. The shah-zada, heir-apparent of the throne of Delhi, had obtained from his father the appointment of Soubahdar of Bengal, a richer prize than even the appointment of the Soubahdar of the Deccan. He immediately put forth a procla-

mation, announcing himself as viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and collected an army to assert claims in a more substantial manner.

The nabobs of Oude and Allahabad at once tendered their support as an act of loyalty to the Mogul, and Meer Jaffier utterly despaired of encountering these nabobs, and the irregular army collected from every quarter by his competitor. His resource was Clive. He could trust no one else. He was profuse in his promise of future good behaviour and large grants of money, although at the time his own troops were defrauded of their pay, while he and his dissipated son lived in scandalous and foolish luxury and excesses. While claiming the protection of the English, and promising everything to them, he was, after the fashion of Indian princes, opening negotiations with his enemies unknown to his allies, and resorting to the desperate, and in his case foolish expedient of bribing them off. Clive soon discovered this, and remonstrated; but the cowardly Jaffier could not see the force of these protests. All his predecessors had purchased immunity from invasion in a similar manner. Clive became more energetic in his tone, and wrote:—"If you do this, you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money until you have none left in your treasury. I beg your excellency to rely on the fidelity of the English and of the troops that are attached to you." Clive, concluding that his advice would not be followed by his protégé, unless the chief officers of the latter showed some determination, wrote to the governor of Patna in a still more energetic tone:—"Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

The enemy advanced by forced marches to the investiture of Patna, in order to anticipate Clive, who, he had heard, was also advancing with the utmost rapidity, to save that important city. Clive's little army consisted of less than three thousand fighting men, of whom less than five hundred were Europeans. The enemy numbered forty thousand men, besides large forces in support from Oude and Allahabad. There was also a considerable number of French officers among them, who were eager for battle with the English. These assured the native prince that, if the vast army would press the siege of Patna, and attack the force of Clive under their directions, the British and their allies should be

\* *Critical and Historical Essays*. By Thomas Babington Macaulay, vol. ii. p. 108-9.



scattered as the dust by the storm, and the city, with its riches, fall into the hands of the besiegers. In vain the gallant Frenchmen urged battle upon the prince and his generals; they fled before Clive's force came in sight. Probably no Indian army ever so much disgraced itself. The flight of the army was not, however, as Lord Macaulay represents wholly caused by terror of Clive and his British. The Nabob of Oude had proved treacherous: he had seized the capital of his ally, the Nabob of Allahabad, who withdrew his forces from before Patna, to save his own territories. M. Law, with a detachment of French, met this nabob with his troops and urged his return to the siege, offering his aid, and afterwards to effect the restoration of the territory seized by the nabob of Oude. The Allahabad nabob was too much in earnest to save his treasures and territory to think any more of Patna and the alliance. M. Law, instead of advancing and rallying the army of the invader, as Clive would have done in like circumstances, retired in despair, and the heterogeneous masses of the shah-zada dissolved as snow flakes in the river. The vicinity of Patna was cleared of intruders, and Clive returned to Moorshedabad in triumph as complete as when he entered it after the battle of Plassey. The Mogul, or, at all events, the pretender to the soubahdarship of Bengal acting in his name, negotiated for the cession of his claims. A small grant of money was given to him, on condition that he signed a treaty conferring *the nominal rank* of soubahdar of Bengal upon another son, and, by patent, confirming Meer Jaffier in the actual viceroyalty.

The viceroy seemed now secure against all enemies, having the sanction of the Mogul himself for his government, and so great was his gratitude that he conferred the jaghire of Calcutta and the surrounding territory upon Clive. Thus the East India Company became his tenants, and the rent they paid to the soubahdar was in future to be paid to him. This amounted to £30,000 a year. He was at the same time made "a lord" of the Mogul empire by the Mogul. The East India Company recognised the privileges conferred upon Clive, and paid their rents to him. From their subsequent conduct, it was evident they were influenced in this by a view of their own interests. This princely fortune rendered it unnecessary that they should confer upon him large pecuniary rewards for the great services he had rendered, and if at any time they thought it expedient to become rent free, it would be probably easier to make themselves so if Clive or his successor was landlord, than if the Mogul or his viceroy

held the jaghireship. There was nothing in the conduct of the company at the time that was unfair to Clive, but afterwards efforts were made to deprive him of his rights by some of the very men who were forward in recognising them when they were acquired. Lord Macaulay, who questioned the propriety politically and ethically of Clive's reception of the previous donations of Meer Jaffier, considered his acceptance of this gift proper. His lordship assigns no reason for this discrepancy of opinion, except that this donation, from its nature, could not be secret; yet he admits that Clive made no secret, and never intended to make any, of the previous acquisitions from Meer Jaffier. If the reception of money in the one case were right, it requires a casuistry more subtle, and a logic more profound than even his lordship's, to make it appear wrong in the other. The East India Company's recognition was equally extended to both. Clive did not represent the British government, but a trading company which favoured any acquisitions made by its servants which did not infringe its rights or emoluments. This must be kept in view in all arguments that are maintained upon the subject.

Scarcely had Meer Jaffier conferred honours and endowments upon Clive than he began a series of intrigues, of a daring nature, against the English themselves. He knew that he could obtain no absolute power in Bengal while the English were there, and he formed the design of allying himself to the Dutch for the purpose of driving them out. There was no other European state to which he could apply. The Dutch were supreme in the Archipelago, and their fame was still great in India. The viceroy did not know that the power of Holland had much decayed in Europe, the wars with the English having issued in reducing the United Provinces from the position of first naval power. By the instrumentality of the Dutch, Meer Jaffier determined to play this new game, and incur the peril of losing all or driving the English away. It does not seem to have occurred to him that the Dutch would in turn have become his masters, and that the only true reliance for a prince or a people, where independence is to be sought and won, should be on

"Native swords and native ranks."

It is probable that this treacherous and feeble prince would not have ventured upon so daring a scheme, had he not believed that the recognition of his actual viceroyalty by the Mogul secured him against all danger of insurrection in his own territories, or invasion by his Mohammedan neighbours. Clive soon discovered that some intrigue was proceeding,



but does not appear to have had the least suspicion that a European power was concerned, or even contemplated by Meer Jaffier. He lost all confidence in his protégé, and began to regard it as politic to prepare for the assumption of English power in Bengal, without the intervention of a nabob. In January, 1759, he addressed a letter to Mr. Pitt, requesting him to send a sufficient force "to open a way for securing the soubahdarship to ourselves." His plan was to enter into a treaty with the Mogul, and receive from him the supreme authority in Bengal, subject to the payment of fifty lacs of rupees yearly, which could easily be spared out of the Bengal revenues. Clive, who hated Mohammedanism, and distrusted all Mohammedans of whatever rank, assured Mr. Pitt that Meer Jaffier would break with the English as soon as he found it his interest, no matter under what obligations they laid him; and as to his son and probable successor Meeran, he represented him as "so apparently the enemy of the English, that it will be almost unsafe trusting him with the succession."

The intrigues of Meer Jaffier and his infamous son were successful in gaining over the Dutch. They determined on an expedition to Bengal; a large fleet was fitted out at Batavia, and a considerable body of troops put on board. Their destination was Chinsurah, where the Dutch had a factory, with the chiefs of which Meer Jaffier had conducted his intrigues. Suddenly the presidency at Calcutta was alarmed by the arrival of seven of the largest Dutch ships in the Hoogly, having on board fifteen hundred men; seven hundred of whom were Europeans, and the rest Malays. Holland and England were at peace, and Clive knew that no danger menaced the Dutch settlements, requiring such military reinforcements, and the presence of so powerful a fleet. He therefore determined on intercepting them, so as to prevent the arrival of the troops at Chinsurah. He perhaps never found himself in a more anxious situation. At that time it would have been a serious matter to the English government to be at war with Holland, added to its other European difficulties; the ministry might disavow his acts, notwithstanding the obvious justice and necessity of the course taken by him in such an emergency. Should the English ministry disavow him, and offer compensation to Holland for any injury sustained by the Dutch armament or settlement, it was probable that Clive's great wealth would be seized to make good the amount. The English government had always been rapacious and unjust in its conduct to the company, and seldom allowed justice in the righteous claims of an individual

to stand in the way of its policy. Probably no government in Europe had proved itself so indifferent to individual losses and suffering as the English, when a political purpose was to be served or the exchequer spared, unless indeed the claimant had aristocratic pretensions or influence. Clive doubted much whether his influence or that of the company, or his past services, or his popularity in England, or all these sources of power together, would prove sufficient to deter the English ministry from sacrificing him, if to do so answered a party end, or relieved the court from any embarrassment. A large portion of his money having been sent to Europe through the Dutch East India Company, that company would, in all probability confiscate his deposits, and thus another consideration was added to those of a political as well as personal nature to prevent him from beginning the war by intercepting the Dutch armaments. On the other hand, so large was the force, so faithless the soubahdar, and so few the English troops then disposable for service in Bengal, that if the Dutch once gained a footing, they could hold their position until new and powerful reinforcements to their navy and army should arrive from Batavia, and these, acting with the native army of the soubahdar, might effect the expulsion of the English from Bengal. The soubahdar declared that he knew nothing of the schemes of the Dutch, of which he had received timely and accurate information, and whose agents were actually recruiting in Bahar, Patna, and even Moorshedabad. The Dutch Company had always acted with an ostensible independence of its government, but as constantly with its connivance, and Dutch policy in India and the Eastern seas was piratical. To force a commerce by destroying the ships and settlements of all competitors was the simple policy of the Batavians. It would have been impolitic in the extreme to allow this great force to menace the interests of the English in Bengal. Clive ordered as strong a detachment as he could spare, under Colonel Forde, an officer in whom he placed implicit confidence, to act as an army of observation. Forde endeavoured to prevent the advance of the Dutch troops by remonstrance and expostulation, which were of no avail. Hesitating to proceed to extremities, he sent to Calcutta for positive orders, representing the persistence of the Dutch as only to be overcome by force. Clive was playing cards when the message arrived. He tore off a piece of Forde's letter, and wrote upon it in pencil—"Dear Forde,—Fight 'em immediately, and I will send an order of council to-morrow." Forde did "fight 'em imme-



diately," although with forces much inferior as to number, and so justified Clive's confidence that the Dutch were completely defeated; of the seven hundred Europeans not more than fourteen reached Chinsurah. An attack upon the fleet was also successful, the ships were all made prizes.

The results of these signal defeats were satisfactory, the Dutch at Chinsurah submitted to such terms as Clive thought proper to impose, which were that no fortifications should be erected, and no armed persons to be retained in connection with their factory, except for police purposes; and, upon violation of either of these terms, expulsion from Bengal was mutually recognised as a just penalty. Clive restored the ships at the end of December, 1759.

The fate of Meer Jaffier would have been sealed by these events had policy allowed. He made vehement protestations of fidelity, and declared his entire ignorance of the proceedings of the Dutch; but while the English did not deem it then discreet to act against the soubahdar for what he said or did, they had already resolved in their own minds to allow matters to take their course as regarded him, and await patiently the moment most opportune for setting aside his authority. It is probable from the subsequent conduct of Meer Jaffier, that he penetrated the purposes of the English, and like a true Mussulman, resigned himself to the fate the future might reveal, continued to enjoy his debauches, and to accumulate precious stones, rich apparel and coin, against the probable crisis which awaited him.

Upon the fortunes of Clive these events produced such effects as might be expected. His name and presence awed his own countrymen, and were a terror to every native prince in India. The sepoy idolized him, the native populations of India listened with eagerness to the wandering story-tellers who recounted his feats of arms, embellished by additions of deeds more or less than human, as suited the oriental fancy. The belief was concurrent among the native populations that the devil's inspiration had much to do with the military genius of the great commander. In England his glory was the common subject of conversation, and the universal boast of his countrymen, amongst whom, for so long a time, so few eminent generals had been raised up. Before the Dutch were humbled, Pitt in one of his thrilling orations had passed upon him the highest eulogies, calling him "the heaven-born general, a man who, bred to the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia." Upon this Lord Macaulay remarks:—

"There were then no reporters in the gallery; but these words, emphatically spoken by the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud." The minds of the people of England were thus prepared to hear of great exploits from Clive, and to appreciate them, and as the Dutch were unpopular, the humiliation which he inflicted upon them filled his countrymen with wild delight. It was Forde who really accomplished the feats of battle, but he acted under the inspiration of Clive, who carried away the palm. Clive, however, did justice to the gallant Forde; he was always liberal in praise to the brave, although strict even to tyranny upon all under his command who dared to dispute his will. Forde's previous service in command of a detachment sent to the Northern Circars by Clive, at the instigation of one of the leading polygars in that district, and in opposition to his own council, had been brilliant. Forde met the rajah's troops, and in a pitched battle inflicted upon them as signal defeat as he afterwards gave the Dutch near Chinsurah. This was the means of troubling the French much, and of influencing, favourably to the British, the war in the Carnatic, as already noticed in a more appropriate place. It does not appear, notwithstanding the high opinion of him entertained by Clive, that either the company or his country appreciated the military genius and valour of Forde.

Clive having remitted large sums of money to England, was anxious to see to their security. The Dutch Company held £180,000, the English Company £40,000, and probably £80,000 had been remitted through private hands. He, therefore, in February, 1760, returned to England. His departure was at an unfortunate juncture for Bengal. Before the Dutch invasion, a new invasion by the Mogul prince was threatened, and scarcely had the Dutch episode terminated by the restoration of the captured ships and treasures in December, 1759, than intrigues were discovered among the native princes, and at the court of Moorshedabad, likely to embroil Bengal with surrounding nabobs, and to expose it to insurrectionary movements. Clive, Forde, and other influential officers who were in good health persisted in returning home, in the face of a state of affairs which were perilous, and have not escaped censure for leaving Bengal to its fate. Colonel Calliand, however, was recalled from the Carnatic, and as he was a man of superior military



parts, it was believed by Clive and the council, that he would be able to maintain the interests and honour of the company in military affairs.

Towards the end of November, 1759, Colonel Calliaud arrived in Bengal with reinforcements, and he was at once engaged in active operations to avert the threatened dangers. Clive himself determined to support him, and, if possible, settle matters at Moorshedabad before he departed from India.

The danger immediately impending was a new invasion by the shah-zada. Clive was determined that his highness should, if possible, be severely chastised for his breach of the treaty made upon his former defeat, and he therefore placed at Calliaud's disposal three hundred European infantry, six pieces of cannon with fifty European artillerymen, and one thousand sepoy, and sent him forward at once to Moorshedabad; other forces were to join him, and Clive himself was to follow as soon as his attention to other affairs allowed. Mr. Mill blames the determination of the British to uphold Meer Jaffier against the shah-zada as an encouragement of rebellion, and a participation in it, and he denounces both the morals and policy of Clive's course. Professor Wilson gives the following brief but complete reply to this:—"It was not a question of policy, but one of good faith. By the treaty with Meer Jaffier, as well as by the nature of their connection with him, the English were pledged to assist him against all enemies whatever, and few of the governors of the provinces would have scrupled to consider the emperor as an enemy if he had sought to dispossess them of their soubahs. Even, however, if the theory of obedience to a monarch, who at the very seat of empire was no longer his own master, could be urged with any show of reason, it would not be applicable in the present instance, for the shah-zada was not appointed by the emperor to be his deputy in Bengal, and as Clive pleaded to the prince himself, no communication of his movements or purposes had been made from Delhi. On the contrary, the prince was there treated as a rebel to his father. He could not plead, therefore, the emperor's authority for his incursion, and no other pretext could have afforded him the semblance even of right."

After the shah-zada set out upon his second invasion, various events occurred which complicated the state of affairs. Mr. Mill describes them with so much beauty and accuracy, that his description will admirably convey the position and relation of parties, as events rapidly presented new phases in the general political condition:—"The powerful king of the Abdallees was again on his march

for the invasion of Hindostan. Excited by the approach of formidable danger, the vizir, in a fit of exasperation or despair, ordered the murder of the emperor, the wretched Alumgeer; and the news of this tragical event reached the shah-zada, just as he had passed the Caramnassa into the province of Bahar. He was advised to assume immediately the state and title of emperor; to confer the office of vizir upon Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, and to confirm Nujeeb-ad-Dowlah in the office of Ameer-ul-Omrah. The majesty of the imperial throne, and his undoubted title, had an influence still upon the minds of men. It was now clear and immediate rebellion to resist him; and whatever guilt could be involved in making war upon their rightful sovereign, must be incurred by those who carried arms against him. The English had already familiarized themselves with the idea of rebellion in India; and the consideration of legitimate sovereignty, though the sovereign would have purchased their protection by unlimited grants, appears not to have excited a scruple in a single breast. The new dignity, however, of vizir, called on the Nabob of Oude for some exertions in favour of his sovereign; and the fascination of the imperial title was still of force to collect around him a considerable army. The march of the English was retarded by the necessity of settling terms with the Nabob of Poorania, who had encamped on the left bank of the river between Moorshedabad and Patna, and professed a desire of remaining obedient to Jaffier, provided the English would engage for his security. This negotiation wasted seven days; and in the meantime the emperor advanced towards Patna. Ramuarain, whom the sagacity of Ali Verdi had selected to be deputy-governor of Bahar, on account of his skill in matters of finance, was destitute of military talents: and considering his situation, under the known hatred of Jaffier, as exceedingly precarious, he was unwilling to lay out any of the wealth he had acquired, in providing for the defence of the country. He was still enabled to draw forth a respectable army, reinforced by seventy Europeans and a battalion of English sepoy, commanded by Lieutenant Cochrane; and he encamped under the walls with a view to cover the city."

Colonel Calliaud had united his forces with those of Meeran, who was at the head of fifteen thousand men and twenty-five pieces of cannon. The British colonel enjoined upon Cochrane defensive measures, and to avoid giving battle until he and Meeran should come up. Cochrane was either unwilling or unable to obey those commands,



and a battle was fought, in which a signal defeat was sustained by Cochrane and his native coadjutor, Ramnarain, the governor of the province, who was a good financier and a bad soldier. The chief officers of Ramnarain behaved faithlessly, and endeavoured to bring over the troops to the service of the Mogul. The English never fought better, and, few as they were, cut their way through the enemy, or rather the enemy, awed by their undaunted bearing, gave way before them, not daring to interpose. Finally, the detachment arrived safely at Patna.

The following curious account of this transaction was given by a Mogul nobleman, and is interesting, as disclosing the light in which the English appeared to men of his class:—"What remained of their people [the English] was rallied by Doctor William Fullerton, a friend of mine, and possibly by some English officers, whose names I know not, who ranged them in order again; and as one of their guns was to be left on the field of battle, they found means to render it useless and of no avail, by thrusting a large needle of iron into its eye. The other being in good condition, they took it with them, together with its ammunition; and that handful of men had the courage to retire in the face of a victorious enemy, without once shrinking from their ranks. During their journey, the cart of ammunition chanced to receive some damage; the doctor stopped unconcernedly, and, after having put it in order, he bravely pursued his route again; and it must be acknowledged, that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array, and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government; if they showed a concern for the circumstances of the husbandman and the gentleman, and exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving and easing the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or prove worthier of command. But such is the little regard which they show to the people of these kingdoms, and such their apathy and indifference for their welfare, that the people under their dominion groan everywhere, and are reduced to poverty and distress. Oh God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions they suffer."

The people of God here referred to were the Mohammedans: the privileges they desired, the power to oppress the Hindoos.

Mill says, "Had the troops of the emperor pushed on with vigour, immediately after this victory, when Ramnarain was severely wounded, his army panic-struck and dispersed, and the city without defenders, they might have taken Patna with the greatest ease. But they employed themselves in ravaging the open country, and in receiving messengers and overtures from Ramnarain, till the 19th of February, when they learned that Meeran and the English were distant from them but twenty-eight miles. The resolution was taken to march and engage them; the next day the two armies approached. Colonel Calliaud urged immediate attack; but Meeran and his astrologers found that the stars would not be favourable before the 22nd. Early on the morning of that day, Calliaud was in motion; but before he could reach the enemy, the day was so far spent 'by the insufferable delays,' as he himself complains, of 'Meeran's march,' that, wishing to have time before him, he was unwilling to engage till the following morning. The enemy, however, advanced, and Calliaud drew up his men between two villages which covered both his flanks, advising Meeran to form a second line, the whole of which, except the two wings, would have been covered by the English and the villages. But, though this was agreed upon, 'he crowded his army upon the right, and, in spite of the most pressing and repeated solicitations, presented to battle a body of fifteen thousand men, with a front of scarcely two hundred yards, in a tumultuous unformed heap.' With a feigned appearance of directing the main attack upon the English, the enemy advanced, with the best part of their army, upon Meeran, who, in about ten minutes, began to give way. Colonel Calliaud, however, marched with a battalion of sepoys to his aid, and immediately decided the fate of the day."

Calliaud in vain endeavoured to induce Meeran to pursue the enemy, or place a body of cavalry at his disposal, with which, in conjunction with his sepoy infantry, he would himself give chase. Meeran preferred enjoying himself at Patna in his usual dissipations. This he continued to do until the 29th of January, 1760. Meanwhile, the emperor, who had retreated to Bahar, gathered courage, and resolved, if possible, to gain some days' march between the allies and Moorshedabad, and seize the viceroy and the capital before the self-indulgences at Patna terminated. When Meeran consented to move, the emperor was on his march to execute the stratagem he had projected. Calliaud, by forced marches and by sending swift boats with troops up the river, was enabled so to menace the emperor's flank as to cause him to change his route,



still vigilantly followed by Calliaud. The viceroy meantime became apprised of the danger, mustered what forces he could, and received two hundred men from Calcutta. This army formed a junction with that under Meeran and Calliaud, and, in the face of a meditated attack, the emperor burned his camp, and retreated. Calliaud was of opinion that, by better concerted movements and more celerity, the imperial army might have entered Moorshedabad. Once more Calliaud proposed the pursuit of the retreating foe; but neither the viceroy nor the hope of his house had the courage to adopt his advice. He again urged upon them the necessity of placing some cavalry at his own disposal for the purpose. It was refused. At this juncture, M. Law, at the head of a French force, passed near Patna, which had been left without means of defence; but Law was ignorant of the fact, and proceeded to Bahar, to await the arrival of the emperor. Had the emperor's own army turned aside to Patna with celerity, he would have entered it unopposed. That city had a third piece of good fortune, in escaping the Nabob of Poorania, who, at the moment, declared for the emperor. Patna was within an easy march of his forces; but he neglected the opportunity. Patna, through the bad generalship of all parties, was saved from a *coup* before which it must have fallen. The emperor, however, when the opportune moment had passed away, advanced against it. The English factors and the native governor had thrown up defences and organized a force. Calliaud, with his usual sagacity and promptitude, had dispatched two hundred European soldiers—the *élite* of his army—and a battalion of sepoys. Before this force could arrive, the emperor, joined by M. Law and the French, pressed the siege, and, having demolished part of the ramparts, assaulted the place. Dr. Fullerton, the English surgeon, with that courage which the medical men attached both to the company's and the royal army have so frequently shown, at the head of such force as he could collect, repulsed the assailants. In two days, Law, with his Frenchmen, renewed the assault, and succeeded in scaling the broken ramparts. Again Dr. Fullerton, and one Rajah Shitabroy, succeeded in repelling the assailants. It was, however, expected that the whole French force, supported by the emperor's best native troops, would the next night renew the assault, and the citizens had no reliance upon themselves, and no hope of again repelling the stormers. While all was despair and confusion in the city, Captain Knox, with the light companies of his force, was seen from the walls rapidly approaching. He had, by forced

marches, reached Patna in thirteen days, himself and his men having endured terrible hardships from fatigue and heat. That evening he reconnoitred the enemy, who were deterred from offering an assault to the city. Next day, at the usual hour of temporary repose in India, Knox surprised the enemy while the troops were asleep, entered their works, and made havoc of those who occupied them. The main army retired.

The Nabob of Poorania, who still lingered in the neighbourhood, at last began his march to join the emperor. Knox proposed to the governor of Patna to cross the river, and so harass the nabob as to detain him until Calliaud and Meeran should arrive. The governor assented; but when the hour for action came, none of the native troops or citizens would venture upon an expedition which appeared to them so full of peril. Rajah Shitabroy had three hundred men in his pay, who had caught the fire of their master's spirit: these joined Knox, and the little army crossed the river. It was the captain's plan to effect a night surprise; but his guide deceived him, and kept him and his troops uselessly wandering about until morning, when, wearied, he and his men lay down upon their arms. At that moment the advanced guard of the enemy approached. Knox took up his position with skill, and a battle ensued, which lasted for six hours. The enemy's troops numbered twelve thousand men, and again and again surrounded the little bands of Knox and the rajah, but were repulsed with heavy slaughter. At last disheartened, the enemy began to show symptoms of disorder. The English commander charged with his whole force. The rajah's troops were cavalry, and were most efficient in the charge. The enemy was pursued until dark.

During the terrible contest the citizens crowded the ramparts, their minds alternating between hope and fear; but, on the whole, their coward hearts yielded to the latter. They saw the ebb and flow of battle, and trembled with alarm, and were, no doubt, ready to welcome any victor who might approach from the contested field, if only they could secure their goods.

The glorious conduct of Knox and his brave native colleague, Rajah Shitabroy, was thus oddly noticed by a native author already quoted:—"When the day was far spent, a note came to Mr. Amyatt from Captain Knox, which mentioned that the enemy was defeated and flying. The intelligence was sent to all the principal men of the city, and caused a deal of joy. I went to the factory, to compliment the gentlemen, when, in the dusk of the evening, Captain Knox himself crossed



over, and came with Shitabroy and his party. They were both covered with dust and sweat. The captain then gave some detail of the battle, and paid the greatest encomiums on Shitabroy's zeal, activity, and valour. He exclaimed several times, 'This is a real nabob; I never saw such a nabob in my life.' A few moments after, Ramnarain was introduced. He had in his company both Mustapha Koollee Khan, and the cutwal of the city, with some other men of consequence, who, on hearing of the arrival of these two men, had flocked to the factory; and, on seeing them alone, could not help believing that they had escaped from the slaughter; so far were they from conceiving that a few hundreds of men could defeat a whole army. Nor could they be made to believe (impressed as they were with Hindoo notions) that a commander could quit his army so unconcernedly, unless he had indeed run away from it: nor would listen to what Mr. Amyatt repeatedly said, to convince Ramnarain and others of their mistake."\*

The immediate consequence of the victory was that the nabob gave up his idea of marching to join the emperor, but turned his course northward; Calliaud and Meeran arriving, they crossed the Ganges in pursuit, and soon overtook him, because of the encumbrances of baggage and heavy guns of position by which his army was attended. The nabob drew up in battle array, but with no disposition to fight. He merely sought time to place his treasures and women on camels and swift elephants, and then, calling in his skirmishers, left his baggage and guns in the hands of the English, and precipitately retreated.† The conduct of Meeran was dastardly in the extreme on this occasion. Calliaud‡ thus describes it:—"The young nabob and his troops behaved in this skirmish in their usual manner, halting above a mile in the rear, nor ever once made a motion to sustain the English. Had he but acted on this occasion with the least appearance of spirit, and made even a semblance of fighting, the affair must have proved decisive; nor could Cuddum Houssein Khan or his treasure have escaped." Calliaud pursued the nabob, and the reluctant Meeran joined in the pursuit.

Many months of 1760 had now been consumed in repelling the invasion of the shahzada, and many defeats were inflicted upon him and his coadjutors; yet adherents among the native chiefs, of various ranks, still joined his standard; and his attainment to the throne of empire rendered it very likely that this

would continue to be the case, unless blow after blow were struck by the British and their ally with rapidity and severity. It was the month of July: the rains were falling; and the nabob would soon be beyond reach of his pursuers, unless rapid advance was made, in spite of the tempests which now impeded the march of bodies of men in northern Bengal. Meeran reluctantly struggled forward, under the pressure of remonstrance and entreaty from the vigorous and active Calliaud. On the night of the 2nd of July, after four days of severe pursuit, an event occurred which materially altered the prospects of the war. The night was one of fierce and uninterrupted storm: thunder shook the allied camps, and the forked lightnings played amid the tents like incessant showers of fiery darts. Many of the natives believed that the gods bent their bows and discharged their arrows among the helpless host, and the invisible world fought against their cause. Meeran, always solicitous for his own safety and harassed with superstitious fears, forsook his tent, which was a rich and wide-spread pavilion of light texture, for one of less dimensions and superior strength. He was attended by only two persons—a domestic slave, a favourite, who chafed his limbs to induce slumber, and a story-teller, to amuse his wakeful hours, after the manner of the East. The thunder-storm poured its successive peals along for hours over the country, and the fierce lightnings searched the camp. When, at last, the fury of the elements abated, the guards of Meeran, who crouched without, entered his tent for orders, when they found their master and his two attendants stiffened in death, their bodies seathed with lightning and their costume singed or burned. Six holes were numbered on the back part of the commander's head, and his body was streaked as if with the marks of a whip. A scimitar, which lay on the pillow above his head, was also perforated, and the point melted. The tent-pole was charred. A single stroke of the electric fluid had blasted the life of the prince and his attendants. The French afterwards raised a rumour in India that the English had assassinated Meeran. Edmund Burke alluded to this rumour in his celebrated speech opening the charge against Warren Hastings. The imputation was not only unfounded, but absurd. The English had no interest in so acting at that moment, but strong interest to the contrary, as the conduct of Calliaud immediately showed. That officer saw that further pursuit of the enemy was, by the event, rendered impossible. Native armies generally disperse when a chief falls; and, should the like then happen, the peril of the English troops would indeed be great. Calliaud

\* *Seer Mutakhareen*, vol. ii. p. 123.

† *Scott's History of Bengal*, pp. 392—397.

‡ *Calliaud's Narrative*, p. 34.



concealed the death, and had the prince placed upon an elephant, as if alive. He then proceeded by forced marches to Patna, alleging that Meeran was ill, to account for his not appearing on the march. Calliaud placed his troops in what the English in India called "winter quarters." Most of the Bengalees attributed the death of Meeran to the retribution of the gods upon his crimes. The

Mohammedans entertained an opinion that God had sent the stroke in consequence of the dying curse of the widow of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. The campaign with the emperor had, however, terminated, not to be renewed in favour of Meer Jaffier, and, at this juncture of affairs, Mr. Vansittart arrived in Calcutta from Madras, as the successor of Clive in the government of Bengal.

## CHAPTER LXXV.

WARREN HASTINGS PROMINENT IN THE AFFAIRS OF BENGAL—GOVERNOR VANSITTART OPPOSED BY THE COUNCIL—WAR WITH THE EMPEROR—DEFEAT OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY, AND OF THE FRENCH, WITH THE CAPTURE OF M. LAW, THE FRENCH CHIEF—ESTABLISHMENT OF MEER COSSIM IN THE SOUBAHDARSHIP BY THE ENGLISH.

In the events which had occurred in Bengal up to the period of the arrival of Mr. Vansittart as governor, a young man took part who was destined to play a prominent part in the history of India. That young man was Warren Hastings.

Miss Martineau, reviewing this period of the history of Bengal, pithily observes:—"Where was young Hastings during these years? He had joined Clive's expedition with enthusiasm when it came up from Madras in December, 1756. But Clive soon discovered that Hastings had abilities which marked him out for political business; and he appointed him resident agent at the new nabob's court. Soon after Clive's departure in 1760, Hastings was wanted at Calcutta as a member of council. He was in full training for his future work." To the influence of Clive much of the boldness and persistency of the policy of Hastings may probably be attributed. They admired one another, and the elder and more active man was likely to leave the traces of his strong mind and will upon the versatile, susceptible, and impressible youth who watched the intrigues of the court of Moorshedabad, and informed the governor of Bengal of the policy pursued there. Clive depended much upon the genius of Hastings for correct information and useful suggestions, for already the subtle and penetrating mind of the diplomatist gave proof of its fine edge and polished surface.

It will be appropriate in this place to take some notice of the life of Warren Hastings up to the time at which our history has arrived. Lord Macaulay\* thus writes of his origin:—"Warren Hastings sprang from an

ancient but illustrious race. It is affirmed that the pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea king, whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valour and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendour of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from fable. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the white rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon. . . . The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, claimed to be the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford family, although not ennobled, was wealthy and highly considered, till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the civil war. The Hastings of that time was a zealous cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over the greater part of the remainder to Speaker Lenthall. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family, but it could no longer be kept up, and in the following generation was sold to a London merchant. Before the transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value, and the situation of the poor clergyman after

\* *Critical and Historical Essays; contributed to the Edinburgh Review*, vol. ii. p. 182.



the sale of the estate was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in law-suits about tithes with the new lord of the manor, and was at last utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well-conducted young man, obtained a place in the Customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle, worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife before he was two years married, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune."

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the 6th of December, 1732. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependent on his distressed grandfather. Such were the origin and early history of one of whom the same writer also says, "No cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very ploughmen observed and long remembered how very kindly little Warren took to his book." It was while at school in the rustic village at Daylesford, and while the playmate of its rustic children, that young Hastings pondered the idea of ultimately becoming the lord of his ancestors' estates. His uncle Howard took charge of him in his ninth year, and he was sent to school in London. In his eleventh year he was sent to Westminster school, where he was the fellow student of various youths who, like himself, became men of note.

On the death of his uncle, Howard Hastings, a distant relative or connection, to whose care he had been consigned by his uncle, procured him a writership in the company's service. In October, 1750, when only in his seventeenth year, he arrived in Bengal. He remained two years in the secretary's office at Calcutta, and was then sent to Cossimbazar. In that place he remained several years, making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. He was thus occupied when the sanguinary Suraj-ad-Dowlah seized upon the English there. The compassion felt by some Dutch merchants for one so young, delicate, and intelligent, induced them to plead for him, and he was released from confinement and was a sort of prisoner at large at Moorshedabad. He thence secretly corresponded with the English council when they fled from Calcutta, and he displayed such courage, capacity, and diligence in obtaining information, and such judgment and talent in the opinions he expressed, as to surprise the council, and excite their admiration of his abilities.

When Clive arrived in the Hoogly with the expedition from Madras, Hastings contrived to join it as a volunteer, and by his heroism and sagacity secured the high opinion and confidence of Clive. Immediately after the

battle of Plassey, Hastings was appointed agent for the company at the court of the new soubahdar; where he continued an invaluable servant, until the honour of member of council at Calcutta was conferred upon him. During the administration of Mr. Vansittart, Hastings was deprived of the influence to which his genius entitled him by the corrupt council. The period between Clive's first government of Bengal, the history of which has been recorded in foregoing pages, and his second government of Bengal, the history of which is yet to be related, was one of maladministration on the part of the English, and it is proper to anticipate somewhat our narrative, by quoting what Lord Macaulay, in his criticism of Gleig's *Life of Hastings*, has said of our hero's conduct during that interval:—"Of the conduct of Hastings at this time little is known; but the little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honourable to him. He could not protect the natives; all that he could do was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them, and this he appears to have done. It is certain that at this time he continued poor, and it is equally certain that by cruelty and dishonesty he might have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a part in the worst abuses which then prevailed, and it is almost equally certain that if he had borne a part in these abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole public life was subjected, a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind, is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many blemishes to light, but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light. The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not addressed to the ruling passion of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions, but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled statesman; but still he was a statesman and not a free-booter."

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realized only a very moderate fortune, and that moderate fortune was soon



reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality, and partly by his mismanagement. "Towards his relations he appears to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings he left in Bengal, hoping, probably, to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together, and Hastings lost both interest and principal." During the four years Hastings remained at home, as well as the four years he remained in India after Clive resigned the governorship of Bengal, many momentous events occurred in India, which prepared the way for the exalted position Hastings ultimately held, and which were of themselves of magnitude and deep importance; to them it is necessary now to turn. The departure of Clive threw the affairs of Bengal into much confusion. It has been already shown that under the heroes, Calliaud and Knox, British valour was as triumphant as if Clive himself led the soldiers; but the civil concerns of the presidency were too complicated to be set or kept in order by a genius less commanding than Clive himself. There existed much discontent on the part of the English officials, even in high places, with the neglect shown by the company to men of parts, and the partialities evinced in the promotions, civil and military. To such an extent did the dissatisfaction with the company spread, that the following extraordinary document was sent home before Clive took his departure, who had himself, although the company's chief officer in Bengal, taken an active part in its production:—"Having fully spoken to every branch of your affairs at this presidency, under their established heads, we cannot, consistent with the real anxiety we feel for the future welfare of that respectable body from whom you and we are in trust, close this address without expostulating with freedom on the unprovoked and general asperity of your letter *per Prince Henry* packet. Our sentiments on this head will, we doubt not, acquire additional weight, from the consideration of their being subscribed by a majority of your council, who are, at this very period, quitting your service, and consequently independent and disinterested. Permit us to say that the diction of your letters is most unworthy yourselves and us, in whatever relation considered, either as masters to servants, or gentlemen to gentlemen. Mere inadvertencies and casual neglects, arising from an unavoidable and most complicated confusion in the state of your affairs, have been treated in such language and sentiments as nothing but the most glaring and premeditated faults could warrant. Groundless informations have, without further scru-

tiny, borne with you the stamp of truth, though proceeding from those who had therein obviously their own purpose to serve, no matter at whose expense. These have received from you such countenance and encouragement as must most assuredly tend to cool the warmest zeal of your servants here and everywhere else; as they will appear to have been only the source of general reflections, thrown out at random against your faithful servants of this presidency, in various parts of your letter now before us,—faithful to little purpose,—if the breath of scandal, joined to private pique or private or personal attachments, have power to blow away in one hour the merits of many years' services, and deprive them of that rank, and those rising benefits, which are justly a spur to their integrity and application. The little attention shown to these considerations in the indiscriminate favours heaped on some individuals, and undeserved censures on others, will, we apprehend, lessen that spirit of zeal so very essential to the well-being of your affairs, and, consequently, in the end, if continued, prove the destruction of them. Private views may, it is much to be feared, take the lead here, from examples at home; and no gentlemen hold your service longer, nor exert themselves further in it, than their own exigencies require. This being the real present state of your service, it becomes strictly our duty to represent it in the strongest light, or we should, with little truth, and less propriety, subscribe ourselves."

The company's reply to this was resolute, stern, and uncompromising. It was as follows, dated the 21st of January, 1761:—"We have taken under our most serious consideration the general letter from our late president and council of Fort William, dated the 29th of December, 1759, and many paragraphs therein containing gross insults upon and indignities offered to the court of directors; tending to the subversion of our authority over our servants, and a dissolution of all order and good government in the company's affairs: to put an immediate stop therefore to this evil, we do positively order and direct that, immediately upon receipt of this letter, all those persons still remaining in the company's service who signed the said letter, viz., Messieurs John Zephaniah Holwell, Charles Stafford Playdell, William Brightwell Sumner, and William M'Guire, be dismissed from the company's service; and you are to take care that they be not permitted, on any consideration, to continue in India, but that they are to be sent to England by the first ships which return home the same season you receive this letter."



Mr. Vansittart had from the first been opposed by a faction in the council, and "the dismissal of which this letter was the signal, not only gave a majority in the council to the party by whom he was opposed, but sent Mr. Ellis, the most intemperate and arbitrary of all his opponents, to the chiefship of the factory at Patna. He treated the nabob with the most insulting airs of authority, and broke through all respect for his government. So early as the month of January he gave his orders to the commander of the troops to seize and keep prisoner one of the nabob's collectors, who had raised some difficulties in permitting a quantity of opium, the private property of one of the company's servants to pass duty free as the property of the company. This outrage the discretion of the officer avoided, by suspending obedience to the order, and sending a letter to the nabob, to redress by his own authority whatever might appear to be wrong."\*

This Mr. Ellis continued, with indomitable energy and violence, to contravene the orders of Mr. Vansittart; and his disobedience and insults to the governor received such a measure of support from the opposition in the council as to render nugatory all attempts on the part of the governor to enforce discipline and order. The factious spirit of the council was not without provocation, and, strangely, that provocation was supplied mainly through Clive's instrumentality, in the very way against which he and his brother officials so strongly protested when the company, without his intervention, acted in a similar manner.

Vansittart was appointed governor of Bengal at Clive's suggestion. This offended Holwell, who had rendered more service in the civil department than any of the company's officials, who bravely battled when the council of Calcutta fled, who, during Clive's government, was the most efficient civilian in high office, and upon whom the great dictator devolved important duties. When Clive left India, the government rested upon Holwell *pro tempore*, and he was undoubtedly better fitted for the post than any other member of the council. Mr. Amyatt, a man reckoned by his fellow councillors of consequence, claimed the office on the ground of seniority, and the council and civilians generally regarded it as unjust to place a gentleman from Madras over his head. Clive, for reasons that appeared weighty to himself, recommended Vansittart, who, from the above-named causes, was obstructed, from the moment of his entering office, by those who felt themselves aggrieved. This was not the only cause of their opposition. A large number of the company's ser-

vants were trading on private account in such a manner as to be ruinous to the company. They interfered with the native transit trade in a manner which, through the various revolutions in the soubahdarship of Bengal that ensued, drew forth the remonstrances of each successive nominee of the British in the native government, while the people of Bengal in vain besought the intervention of their soubahdar. Oppression and plunder were rampant amongst the bullying and imperious English officials everywhere. Mr. Vansittart had not the requisite capacity and energy to put a stop to these things; and when a decided majority of the council was obtained against him, he became almost powerless. Lord Macaulay says of him and his position:—"Mr. Vansittart, the governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, accustomed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker was an undertaking which tasked to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The monster caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint, and then was seen, what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles—the strength of civilization without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check—imperfect, indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance—when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment, such as then afflicted Bengal, it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against demons. The only protection which the conquered could find was in the moderation, the clemency, the enlarged policy of the conqueror. That protection at a later period they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time when they became our subjects, and the time at which we began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duty of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant of the company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily

\* Mill, book iv. chap. v.



as possible, that he might return home before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square."

This description is not so overdrawn as not to describe generally the condition of things, and show how helpless was the governor in the transactions which took place under his government, financial and military, among the English themselves in their relations to native princes and states, and to the unfortunate Bengalees who groaned beneath their rapacity and oppression. In the narrative of Mr. Vansittart himself, published after his resignation of the government of the presidency, there is at once the clearest and most concise account that has ever appeared of its real condition, and of the English interest in Bengal at the period of Mr. Vansittart's arrival. It is fortunate that the statements of Mr. Vansittart himself are still in existence, as they describe with truth and simplicity a period amongst the most remarkable and eventful epochs in the history of the British empire in India. The events of that time, and the part taken in them by our countrymen, are amongst those most discussed by recent erities and historians. The originality and importance of the document excuse its length. The condensation of its style, and the authority of the writer, alike forbid abridgment. Mr. Vansittart states:—"It is foreign to my purpose to enter into any detail of the transactions of Meer Jaffier's government, from the time of his being raised to the soubahdarship till the month of July, 1760, when I came to Bengal, to succeed Colonel Clive. It is enough if I give a plain and distinct view of the situation in which I found his affairs, and the company's. The greatest part of the nabob's and the English forces was at Patna, to oppose the shah-zada, who, for three years successively, had invaded the province, and at this time was more powerful than ever, by the number of disaffected zemindars who had joined him, or espoused his interest, in different parts of the country. The nabob's army consisted as usual of a great number of undisciplined people, who were never regularly paid, but were kept together by the promises of Saddoe Allee Cawn,\* the nabob's son, who commanded them, that he would be answerable for their arrears one time or other. Being disappointed of these hopes by the death of the nabob's son, who was killed by lightning, the 3rd of July, their clamorous demands could no longer be restrained, and a general plunder and desertion were daily expected. Colonel Calliaud, who commanded the English

forces after Colonel Clive's departure for Europe, stopped these clamours for a moment, by his promises to secure the payment of their arrears from the nabob; but the English troops were in little better condition than the nabob's; they had two or three months' arrears due to them, the nabob having failed in the payment of the sum stipulated for their maintenance, which was a lac of rupees a month, and the low state of the treasury at Calcutta not admitting of the deficiency being supplied from thence. The effects of this were seen by the desertion of many of our men; and the army, thus situated, was within thirty miles of the shah-zada's whole force. The situation of affairs at Moorshebadad, where the nabob resided, was still more alarming. Far from being in a condition to pay off the arrears of his troops at Patna, he had a large number of the same undisciplined rabble about his person, and was no less in arrears to them; these also losing their best dependence, by the death of the nabob's son, could no longer be satisfied with promises, but insisted, in a most tumultuous manner, on immediate payment. More than once they surrounded the palace, abused the principal officers in the most opprobrious language, and daily threatened the nabob's life; through the weakness of his government, and the general disaffection of the people, the revenues of most parts of the province were withheld by the zemindars, and the nabob had so little attention to, or capacity for business, that what little was collected was, in a great measure, appropriated by his favourites to their own profit. The Beerboom rajah, whose country is situated within a few miles of the capital, Moorshebadad, had declared for the shah-zada, and had raised a force, with which he threatened to attack the city; and the nabob had so little power of opposing him, that a body of troops, which were ordered out against him in the month of June, refused to march, and were yet in the suburbs when I arrived there in the month of October. Upon the whole, there was the greatest reason to apprehend, that the disorderly troops would lay waste and plunder the city, and put an end at once to the nabob's government and life. At Calcutta the treasury was so low, and our resources so much drained, that we were obliged to put an entire stop to the investment, and it was with the utmost difficulty the current expenses of the settlement could be provided for. The lac of rupees, which the nabob was to pay monthly for the field-expenses of our troops, remained, as I before observed, two or three months in arrears; and even supposing it to have been regularly paid, was very insufficient for the intended

\* Commonly called the Chuta nabob,



use; so that the company, upon this footing, would have suffered a considerable loss by their alliance with the nabob, as often as the situation of affairs required their troops to be in the field, of which the appearance of troubles on every side afforded no prospect of an end. The Burdwan and Nuddea countries had been assigned to the company, from April, 1758, to April, 1760, for the payment of the sums stipulated in the treaty, for the restitution of the company's and private losses by the capture of Calcutta. Of that amount about twenty lacs remained due at the time of my arrival, although the term of the assignment had been expired some months: and the nabob, at the same time that he could find no means of discharging this balance, insisted on the lands being restored to him, offering a security of jewels in their stead. He sent the Royroyan, one of his principal officers, to Calcutta, to make this demand, and at the same time to request the loan of a sum of money to assist him in his distress. The last was a proposal we had it not in our power to comply with; but the first could not in justice be refused, as he was willing to give other security, in lieu of the lands before assigned; so that we were absolutely left without any resources for money, and the company sent out none from Europe. To add to our difficulties, Madras and Bombay were told that they must depend on supplies from Bengal; and in the midst of this distress, not only the dangerous state of the province obliged us to keep all our forces in the field, at an immense expense, but a still more interesting object for the English nation in India, I mean the success of the undertaking against Pondicherry, which was then invested, depended, in a great measure, on a supply of money. The nabob, through an habitual indolence, was quite incapable of managing his government in such critical circumstances; and the sudden and unfortunate death of his son had thrown him into such a state of dejection that he would not even try to exert the little strength which his faculties had left. Unable as the nabob was to help himself, it was the universal opinion, founded on the experience of his former conduct, that he would rather have seen himself and the province involved in one general ruin than have given us the means of saving him, by putting more power and more resources of money in our hands. The Dutch directors' letters to him, and his behaviour at the time their forces came into the country, are a public testimony of his desire to reduce our power, instead of augmenting it: I asked a small favour of him for the company, a little after my arrival, as much with a view of sounding his disposition,

as through a desire of obtaining it. It was the grant of the Chittagong province, in farm to the company, on the same terms as it was held by the then fougedar, or if that was disagreeable, the leave only of establishing a factory there for trade; but he positively refused to admit of either. I determined not to suffer the affairs of the nation and the company to fall under the ruin they were threatened with, without making an attempt to save them, and far from intending any injury to the nabob, I considered the preservation of his life and government as equally depending with our own interests on the immediate prosecution of some methods for remedying the difficulties with which we were surrounded. One principal circumstance of the impending evils suggested the first hopes of a reformation. The death of the nabob's son had cut off the heir-apparent of the government: he had two sons by concubines, and a grandson, the child of his deceased son, by a concubine also; the eldest of his two sons was little above ten years old, and his grandson an infant of a few months, so that they were incapable of taking care of the business, supposing the objection of their illegitimacy to be of no weight. In these circumstances, the whole province seemed to turn their eyes on Meer Cossim, who was married to Meer Jaffier's daughter, his only surviving legitimate child; was esteemed a capable man of business, and had been the means of preserving the city from plunder, and the nabob from destruction, by an immediate payment of three lacs of rupees to his troops, and becoming a security for their arrears at the time of their tumultuously surrounding the palace; and this he did, upon promise of being appointed to the vacant offices of his deceased son, and declared his successor. I found Mr. Holwell and the select committee had strongly recommended to the nabob to perform this promise; on the other hand, Mr. Amyatt and Colonel Calliaud had wrote to him in favour of his infant grandson, representing that the troops at Patna insisted on his being named to the vacant offices, and that the Raja Rajebullub, late dewan to the nabob's deceased son, should have the management of them during his minority. The nabob seemingly acquiesced in both recommendations, but continued wavering in his choice, in such a manner as showed that the increase of the English influence was the event that he most dreaded in the appointment of either. This is the only clue which can lead to the motives of the many opposite resolutions which were taken up by the nabob, upon this affair, in the small space of time in which it was suspended. His inclinations first led him to



accept the advice offered him by Colonel Calliaud, in favour of his grandson; but when that advice was urged in more pressing and peremptory style, and Rajebullub, by his emissaries and friends at Durbar, too solicitously laboured to bring about the same design, the nabob became jealous of his growing power, and suddenly declared his resolution to support Meer Cossim in his pretensions, as will appear by the letter he wrote Mr. Holwell and Colonel Calliaud upon this subject. On the other hand, the nabob perceiving that Meer Cossim was warmly supported by Mr. Holwell, appears to have formed the wild scheme of shaking off both, by throwing all the chief offices of the government into the hands of a stranger, named Mirza Daood, who had for some years enjoyed the protection of this court in the character of a prince of the royal blood of Persia. Him the nabob formally contracted to the natural daughter of his deceased son, but a few days after the declaration made in favour of Meer Cossim, who, apprehensive of being disappointed in his hopes by the jealousy and irresolution of the nabob, formed the pretence of negotiating the restoration of Burdwan, and the other assigned lands, to obtain his leave to come down to Calcutta. He arrived there about the middle of September. As he came down with these fears and suspicions of the nabob's disinclination to him, for the favour already shown him by the English, it naturally led him to fall in with any measures which might be proposed by them, as a means of securing the continuation of the same interest in his behalf."

In the foregoing narrative events are referred to which were not recorded in former pages of this history—those connected with a new revolution in Bengal, and the dethronement of Meer Jaffier. This was effected in the manner and temper recorded in the narrative of Mr. Vansittart. Meer Jaffier refused to hold any mere nominal possession of the soubahdarship, and retired to Calcutta, there to live under the protection of the English. He declared that Meer Cossim was a man of too ambitious a character to be bound by treaty, or ties of affinity, and would not trust himself within the limits of his power. This estimate of his son-in-law's character proved ultimately too true.

Among the difficulties which beset the new British governor was a jealousy among the military commanders. Major Carnac arrived to succeed Colonel Calliaud. The army then chiefly lay at Patna, after the death of Meeran. Mr. Vansittart was unwilling to disturb Colonel Calliaud in his command at a juncture which still seemed critical, seeing

that the colonel was well acquainted with men and with affairs at Patna, of which the major was necessarily ignorant. That officer, however, burned to be in command. Ellis, ever ready for violent measures and complaints, made this a matter of discussion in the council, and Vansittart was tormented by his own officers, at a time which required the exercise of their united powers for the common good. All these persons entered into fiercer discussions with one another, and with the governor, concerning the deposition of Meer Jaffier, and the eligibility of his successor.

It is difficult to see what other course was open to the governor than that which he took. Professor Wilson thinks it was impolitic, and thus expresses his views:—"Objections to the removal of Meer Jaffier were made not only by those whose personal feelings might be suspected. The scheme was originally Mr. Holwell's, who communicated in April, to Colonel Calliaud, his anticipation of the necessity of deposing Meer Jaffier. The colonel, in reply, observes, 'Bad as the man may be whose cause we now support, I cannot be of opinion that we can get rid of him for a better, without running the risk of much greater inconveniences attending on such a change than those we now labour under. I presume the establishing tranquillity in these provinces would restore to us all the advantages of trade we can wish, for the profit and honour of our employers, and I think we bid fairer to bring that tranquillity about by our present influence over the soubahdar, and by supporting him, than by any change that can be made.'\*" The removal of Jaffier was an ill-advised measure; there was no absolute impossibility in his performing his engagements with the English, or paying his own troops, for both objects were speedily accomplished by his successor, and he created no new resources. The same means of acquitting his obligations were in Meer Jaffier's reach. There only wanted such support as should enable him, and such control as should compel him, to discharge those demands to which he had rendered himself liable, and the due acquittance of which was essential to the maintenance of that English force upon which his own power, and even his existence depended. Had Clive remained in Bengal, there would probably have been no revolution."

Whatever might have been the policy of Clive, that of Cossim was soon made intelligible, "For, aware that money was the pillar by which alone he could stand, he made so great exertions that, notwithstanding the treasury of Meer Jaffier was found almost empty, he

\* Scrafton's *Observations on Vansittart's Narrative*, p. 12.



paid in the course of a few months the arrears of the English troops at Patna; so far satisfied the troops of the soubahdar, both at Moorshedabad and Patna, that they were reduced to order, and ready to take the field; and provided six or seven lacs in discharge of his engagements with the company, insomuch that the presidency were enabled in November to send two lacs and a half to Madras, whence a letter had been received, declaring that without a supply the siege of Pondicherry must be raised. In the month of January, Major Carnac arrived at Patna, and took the command of the troops. The province of Bahar had suffered so much from the repeated incursions of the emperor; and the finances both of the nabob and of the company were so much exhausted by the expense of the army required to oppose him, that the importance was strongly felt of driving him finally from that part of the country. The rains were no sooner at an end than the English commander, accompanied by the troops of Ramnarain, and those which had belonged to Meeran, advanced towards the emperor, who was stationed at Gyah Maunpore. The unhappy monarch made what exertions he could to increase his feeble army; but Carnac reached his camp by three days' march; forced him to an engagement, and gained a victory.\*

This engagement redounded greatly to the glory of the English. Law, the French commander, was made prisoner, and his forces entirely dispersed. The following graphic account of incidents connected with the capture of M. Law is from the pen of a native and a Mohammedan:—"When the emperor left the field of battle, the handful of troops that followed M. Law, discouraged by his flight, and tired of the wandering life which they had hitherto led in his service, turned about likewise, and followed the emperor. M. Law, finding himself abandoned and alone, resolved not to turn his back; he bestrode one of his guns, and remained firm in that posture, waiting for the moment of his death. This being reported to Major Carnac, he detached himself from his main body, with Captain Knox and some other officers, and he advanced to the man on the gun, without taking with him either a guard or any Talingas (sepoys) at all. Being arrived near, this troop alighted from their horses, and pulling their caps from their heads, they swept the air with them, as if to make him a *salâm*: and this salute being returned by M. Law in the same manner, some parley in their language ensued. The major, after paying high encomiums to M. Law for his perseverance,

conduct, and bravery, added these words:—"You have done everything which could be expected from a brave man; and your name shall be undoubtedly transmitted to posterity by the pen of history: now loosen your sword from your loins, come amongst us, and abandon all thoughts of contending with the English." The other answered, "That if they would accept of his surrendering himself just as he was, he had no objection; but that as to surrendering himself with the disgrace of being without his sword, it was a shame he would never submit to; and that they might take his life if they were not satisfied with that condition." The English commanders, admiring his firmness, consented to his surrendering himself in the manner he wished: after which the major, with his officers, shook hands with him, in their European manner, and every sentiment of enmity was instantly dismissed on both sides. At the same time the major sent for his own palankeen, made him sit in it, and he was sent to camp. M. Law, unwilling to see or be seen, shut up the curtains of the palankeen for fear of being recognised by any of his friends at camp; but yet some of his acquaintances, hearing of his being arrived, went to him. The major, who had excused him from appearing in public, informed them that they could not see him for some days, as he was too much vexed to receive any company. Ahmed Khan Kotchishiee, who was an impertinent talker, having come to look at him, thought to pay his court to the English by joking at the man's defeat; a behaviour that has nothing strange, if we consider the times in which we live, and the company he was accustomed to frequent; and it was in that notion of his, doubtless, that with much pertness of voice and air, he asked him this question; 'And Biby (Lady) Law, where is she?' The major and officers present, shocked at the impropriety of the question, reprimanded him with a severe look, and very severe expressions. 'This man,' they said, 'has fought bravely, and deserves the attention of all brave men; the impertinences which you have been offering him may be customary amongst your friends and your nation, but cannot be suffered in ours, which has it for a standing rule, never to offer an injury to a vanquished foe.' Ahmed Khan, checked by this reprimand, held his tongue, and did not answer a word. He tarried about one hour more in his visit, and then went away much abashed; and although he was a commander of importance, and one to whom much honour had been always paid, no one did speak to him any more, or made a show of standing up at his departure. This reprimand did much honour to the English;

\* Mill, vol. iii. book iv. chap. v.



and it must be acknowledged, to the honour of those strangers, that as their conduct in war and in battle is worthy of admiration, so, on the other hand, nothing is more modest and more becoming than their behaviour to an enemy, whether in the heat of action, or in the pride of success and victory; these people seem to act entirely according to the rules observed by our ancient commanders, and our men of genius."\*

After the battle Major Carnac opened negotiations with the emperor, through Rajah Shitabroy, and subsequently visited the im-

perial camp. The emperor accompanied him thence to Patna. Meer Cossim regarded the good terms upon which the emperor had entered with the English, dangerous to his own power. He arrived at Patna, but embarrassed the imperial alliance in every way he could devise, and refused to pay his respects to the emperor until Major Carnac effected a compromise. Finally, having received an imperial investiture of the soubahdarship, he agreed to pay as tribute to the court of Delhi twenty-four lacs of rupees annually.

## CHAPTER LXXVI.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL—VIOLENT AND FRAUDULENT CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF CALCUTTA—REVENUE CONTESTS BETWEEN THE OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL AND THOSE OF THE SOUBAH DAR—COMMENCEMENT OF WAR BY THE BRITISH—SERIES OF VICTORIES—MASSACRE OF THE ENGLISH AT PATNA—EXPULSION OF MEER COSSIM FROM BENGAL.

ON the return of the emperor towards his capital, he was escorted by Major Carnac to the limits of Bahar, where he tendered to the English the dewanee of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa, and promised firmans as soon as "petitions" for them should be formally presented. Meer Cossim, offended by these proceedings, soon showed that he was not less hostile at heart to the English than any of his predecessors. His whole attention was divided between disputes with the British officials and extortion of money from his own. He was restrained by no sense of the injustice of such deeds, and spared none who refused to find money when he chose to demand it. It would occupy many volumes to describe the rapid passage of events during the government of Mr. Vansittart. The deterioration of the English was rapid. This, with the intrigues and efforts made against British influence by the nabobs, involved terrible consequences.

One prominent incident in the history of the times was the defiance of law, both English and native, which characterised the British traders. The company's servants trading on their own account, and native merchants buying the authority of the company's officers, carried on a system of smuggling, of fraud, and of oppression, which no pen could adequately describe. In order to terminate, if possible, the disputes between the soubahdar and the English traders, Mr. Vansittart, accompanied by Mr. Hastings, sought an interview with the former: through-

out these contentions Mr. Hastings had displayed a strong sense of justice. By his lucid statements and arguments he convinced the governor of the injustice offered to the soubahdar by the English agents, supported by the higher officials and members of council, and he aided the governor in his efforts to induce the council to put a stop to the lawlessness of the company's servants. On the last day of November, 1762, these three important persons met at Mongheer. The soubahdar laid the long list of grievances inflicted upon him by the company's servants before the governor, who soon satisfied the prince that, so far as he and Mr. Hastings were concerned, the insults, indignities, and pecuniary injuries of which the prince complained were unequivocally condemned. It was agreed that all memory of these transactions should be obliterated, and that mutual efforts should be made to put a stop to their recurrence. The soubahdar demanded that the inland trade should be wholly given up by the English. Mr. Vansittart proposed that the trade should be open to all upon a duty payable alike by natives and English. To this the soubahdar showed extreme aversion, but at last gave his sanction. A treaty was accordingly drawn up by Hastings, fixing the duty at nine per cent. on all articles; and Mr. Vansittart returned to Calcutta in January, 1763. On arriving at his seat of government, he found the English in great commotion, denouncing all that he and Hastings had performed. The council passed a resolution that the treaty was null, and that they would pay

\* See *Mutakhareen*, vol. ii. pp. 165, 166.



no duties except  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on salt, as a compliment to the soubahdar. They also resolved that their agents should no longer be amenable to the native tribunals, but that the native officers and traders should be amenable to the English agents in the nearest factory. The spirit and procedure of the council were, in various respects, unjust and fraudulent; but they complained that the governor had made concessions not demanded by justice, and which were injurious to their interests. They considered that the various firmans of the Mogul entitled them to a free trade in the provinces, although the soubahdars and nabobs, where the English forces were weak, had withheld the privilege, and imposed duties contrary to it. Neither Mr. Vansittart nor Mr. Hastings gave, on that occasion, satisfactory replies to these allegations, which were supported by able arguments on the part of several members, especially Mr. Hayes.\*

Meer Jaffier, then resident at Calcutta, authorized the governor's opponents in the council to state that his interpretation of firmans and treaties accorded with theirs. This was said by him to inflame the dispute with Meer Cossim, for his own purposes, for he had never acted upon his own interpretation when he had the opportunity; and when his intrigues issued in his being once more promoted to the musnid, he was as eager as Meer Cossim had been to exclude the English from the country trade, or to levy duties when that could not be effected. The result of the disapproval of the governor's treaty and correspondence with the soubahdar was to render all accommodation impossible, and to throw the whole of Bengal into a state of alarm. The soubahdar's servants were lying, fraudulent, and tyrannical wherever the English were weak; the conduct of the English was similar, and thus a sort of civil war between both was maintained, before any appeal to arms was made by their governments.

A faithful historian can scarcely have a more painful task than to wade through the voluminous correspondence carried on between Mr. Vansittart and his officers, and between him and the soubahdar, or, as Mr. Vansittart in his correspondence always called him, the nabob. Still more painful is it to peruse the voluminous debates and minutes of the council of Calcutta upon the subjects of this correspondence, and the complaints and recriminations of the officers of the company, and those of the soubahdar. So discreditable was the conduct of the English in Bengal during the year 1763, that it leaves

\* *A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal, from 1760 to 1764*, vol. ii. By Mr. Henry Vansittart.

a lasting stain upon the name of our country. The soubahdar, by vigorous efforts, succeeded at last in suppressing violent and fraudulent conduct on the part of his own servants, as far as, perhaps, any governor, British or native, has ever succeeded in doing in that country. Notwithstanding his exactions on coming to the throne, the firmness and equity of his administration were soon felt everywhere among his own people, and, whatever were his faults at first, he redeemed them by the most sedulous care to leave the dishonest English no pretexts for plunder or war. All his fidelity, activity, and intelligence did not avail him. Mr. Vansittart was well satisfied with his conduct, but the governor obtained no support in the council, except from Mr. Hastings, whose conduct was humane, just, and honourable in these transactions. The English gradually threw off all disguise, refused to pay the revenues sanctioned by the treaty, plundered the native cultivators and merchants, beat, and often murdered the native officers of justice, police, and revenue; insulted and defied the person of the soubahdar openly, and regulated their whole conduct as if the council and its agents were banditti organized under the pretence of trade. The plunder thus accumulated was not passed to the account of the company, whose zealous servants the perpetrators professed to be, but was grasped for their private advantage, while the company's affairs were wholly neglected, and heavy expenses incurred in its name. Mr. Vansittart being always in a minority, himself and Hastings being alone on the side of treaty and integrity, he was obliged to write letters to the nabob in the name of the council, of which he and Hastings totally disapproved. The following specimens of the correspondence will enlighten the reader as to the character of the English at that period. They are written by the nabob (properly soubahdar) to Mr. Vansittart, as governor, containing extracts from the correspondence of the latter to which they were in reply. They disclose a dignity, mingled with despair and indignation, on the part of the soubahdar, which gave to his protests and complaints a tone and manner that commanded the sympathy of the governor and of Mr. Hastings.

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 5, 1763.*

I have had the pleasure duly to receive three of your favours, dated the 7th and 8th of Shaaban, and understand the particulars mentioned in them.

At a time when this government was loaded with a balance of revenues due to the king, the arrears of the troops, and debts owing to the English, I marched out of Bengal, and repaired to the extremity of the province of



Bahar, in order to settle these matters. That country being thus left without a ruler, every village and district became ruined by the oppressions of the English agents and gomastahs, an entire stop was put to collecting the revenues, and the merchants, and the poor, and all my officers, and muttaseddees of the public and private receipts of custom, were distressed, and deprived of their daily bread; and I am a sufferer in the revenues due to my administration, by near a crore of rupees. I have in the meanwhile made continual complaints and representations of this injustice, and informed you particularly and circumstantially of all matters: nevertheless, you have been pleased to observe that my officers are to blame.

When you favoured me with a visit at Mongheer, I laid before you all my concerns. You were very earnest in settling all disputes between my government, and the English company and gentlemen, and their gomastahs: and you in some measure comforted me, and persuaded me that "from that time business would be carried on in a proper manner, and my government neither injured, oppressed, or damaged." Afterwards, on your return to Calcutta, contrary to your agreement with me, you detached forces, to carry on the business of the company and English gentlemen by compulsion, and to beat and chastise my officers, if they offered to speak a word. For these three years I have not got a single rupee, nor a thousand rupees; nor one piece, nor ten pieces of cloth; nor a bundle of broad cloth, nor ten bundles; nor a pair of scissors, nor so much as a clasp-knife, from the English gentlemen, or their gomastahs; at the same time, they have by violence levied fines and penalties, and sums for losses in their trade, on my officers, and still continue to levy them; and if any of my officers refuses to submit to this, they pour a storm of complaints on his head.

Lately you have repeatedly ordered me "to let the business of the company, and the English gentlemen, and their gomastahs, go on as was customary heretofore in the different parts of the provinces of Bengal and Bahar; to suffer the money and bullion of your factories to be coined into siccas in my mints; and to have the wicket and intrenchments in the city of Patna opened." I not having it in my power to refuse, have given you the free use of my mint, and directed the wicket to be opened, and a stop to be put to collecting customs upon traffic in the commodities of my country, from all merchants, pykars, and dilolls, in the provinces of Bahar and Bengal; and I have had all gauts and chokeys, both in the city and country round about, entirely removed.

All these my losses are owing entirely to the favour and indulgence of the council; because that my being like the nabob Meer Jaffier indebted to his majesty, and embarrassed by my troops, and reduced to his situation, is what they approve of. However, I can never approve of my people and merchants being distressed, my country oppressed, myself despised, and subjected to daily insults, and my officers and servants ill-treated. I have therefore chosen to give up all those points to you. Now I am in expectation of your answer, to inform me if my life is safe; or if there is anything else to be done?

*From the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 5, 1763.*

Your friendly letter, dated the 8th of Shaaban, is arrived, and I am happy with the news of your welfare.

You write that the opinion of the council is as follows:—"They are all very desirous of assisting and supporting me in my government, but cannot bear with patience, that my officers should impede or damage their commerce; that the report of your setting up another nabob is the weak insinuation of designing men; that the resolution of the board is, to make such an agreement in pursuance of the royal firman, and the rules of equity, as may leave

no room for dispute in future, between my officers and their gomastahs." How can I bring myself firmly to credit this, since Mr. Ellis is one of the council, who, for these two years past, has been endeavouring all in his power to hurt my affairs, and make me appear little in the eyes of the world; nay, is at this time taking pains daily to involve me in trouble, parading his companies of sepoys to provoke me; and omitting no opportunity of depreciating me both in this my own country, and to Suraj-ad-Dowlah, and other great men at court, sending all whatever he can devise to my discredit, by means of Shitabroy, to Suraj-ad-Dowlah, &c., and saying also whatever comes uppermost in his mind to my prejudice in public assemblies?

In regard to what you write concerning the royal firman, and your having in view the preparation of another treaty; when you favoured me with your company at Mongheer, I told you frequently, that "the power of your people was great, but I had little to oppose it. I desired you to consider, nor entertain the notion, that any agreement would be binding with people accustomed to acts of oppression." Is not this an instance of oppression, that the saltpetre farms, which I have allowed unto you gentlemen, upon the produce of which you used to pay formerly three, and three and half rupees per maund, you now forcibly hold at one and three-fourth of a rupee, plundering and injuring my people? In this manner my country is to go to ruin, and I may not utter a word. Besides all this, you write, that it is my own officers who create these disturbances, exercise oppression, and injure the saltpetre farm. This being the case, how can any treaty stand good between us? And how can it take effect, if such oppression continues? Besides, as you have dispatched the company's troops to chastise my officers, if they but murmur at these evils, why need you trouble yourselves to make any other treaty? In my service, there is not one who can prejudice me against you in any affair. Under you there is Mr. Ellis, who fails not to prejudice you with evil insinuations against me, as you must see and be sensible, though you connive at it, and say nothing on the subject; but you are pleased to think (I do know upon what grounds) that I have evil-minded people in my service.

I am at a loss how to act under these censures, and must own myself insufficient, if regulations of this nature take place. Be pleased, therefore, to set me free from the uneasiness of such an administration; and set up a person for conducting it, whom the council may better approve.

Full well I know, that they will both condemn me, and injure your good name, and bring this about at last. Why do they wait for a charge against me? It is not the part of honest men, to bring an unjust charge against any one, with a view to compass other designs; it is better that you do it at this time.

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob to the Governor. Dated March 14, 1763.*

It has been owing solely to the friendship and regard which I bear to you, that I have hitherto constantly borne in my mind the marks of your favour; and, for the friendship and kindness which you have shown to me, I have put up with everything until now that my patience is quite exhausted. Whatever is to be done, do you, sir, do it yourself; why should you cause my authority to be insulted, and my honour injured, by your servants, and people of low character? One man may easily continue in friendship to one man; but to be dependent upon ten people is beyond the power of man.

I have in no wise been deficient in the observance of the treaties which you made with me, but, from the be-



ginning, have scrupulously complied with all my agreements.

At this time, that you have been pleased to write to me to keep open the wicket, and intrenchment in the city of Patna, and for trade to go on as usual, I paid all due respect to your letter, and immediately complied with its contents. I had sent for Mohammed Allee Beg from Dacca, and I was on my way from Patna towards Rajemahl, and had reached Barr, when Mr. Ellis sent three companies of sepoys, with two guns, in order to surround my fortress of Taajepoor, besides other companies towards Durbunga, Mow, Teegra, Sircar Sarum, Tekarry, and other districts in different parts of the province, by which my affairs have been so much hurt, that an entire stop is put to the collection of my revenues.

I knew not in what light to consider all these disturbances, plunderings, and ravages; so, upon information of this news, I dispatched Mohammed Ameen Cawn, one of my jemmatdars, towards Taajepoor, that he might inquire particularly, and bring me intelligence of the cause of so much disorder. He had not reached the place, before the companies above-mentioned had taken hold of Acbur Allee, Naib of Sheer Zanian, my aumil at Taajepoor, and carried him away to Patna. My jemmatdar wrote me these particulars; in answer to which, I sent him orders to bring your gomastah, residing at the factory of Taajepoor, to me, that I might inquire of him, why my aumil had been seized and carried away.

When Mohammed Ameer Cawn drew nigh to the factory, your sepoys there, by order of the gomastah, fired upon him without challenging him. My jemmatdar, having no other resource, made use of the force that he had, seized your gomastah, and brought him to me. I examined into this affair in the best manner, and then dismissed your gomastah. I found from him, that my aumil was by no means in fault; but Ellis, having fixed the blame of all these tumults and disorders upon my aumils, under pretence of the saltpetre, merely from his own hatred to me, and violence of temper, has created these disturbances, and perseveres in them. You wrote me heretofore, that by keeping the wicket in the city of Patna shut, a report would in all probability prevail amongst the people, that the company and I were at variance. Ellis for two years past has been making all these disturbances, in order to demean me, and injure my affairs. Ought I not to be informed, how I am to consider these proceedings, and what is the reason of them? You are my friends, bound to free me from all these insults, which I never can bear with. Since the said gentleman has proceeded to acts of violence against my officers, should my officers, for the sake of their characters, stand upon the defensive, you are not to reproach me with it; but if you are inclined to allow of Mr. Ellis's actions, you will do well to give the country to him, that you and I may be freed from the vexations of it; for I am convinced, that the council will not put an end to these disputes.

I have halted here at Barr two days, on account of this affair; to-morrow I shall march towards Mongheer.

The soubahdar, in order to deal justly with his own people, and, as he hoped, remove all complaints on the part of the British, ordered the entire remission of duties upon the inland trade to English and native merchants alike. This threw the English into a state of panic and rage. They declared it was ruinous to their trade, and meant by the soubahdar to be so. That he had no right, without permission of the emperor, to remit the duties levied upon the native merchants, and no right to levy any duties upon the English. This amounted to a demand for the exclusive trade of the

soubahdar's dominions; and as the East India Company did not profit at all by the inland trade, the demand was in favour of the company's servants, by those servants to be enforced at the expense of the company. It is difficult to conceive a more entire blindness to justice. Yet the council, without shame, inveighed against the governor and Mr. Hastings because they pointed out the absurdity of such claims, and the monstrous oppression of enforcing a monopoly of trade against the soubahdar's own subjects in his own dominions.

Meantime, violence and outrage on the part of the English increased, and nothing was left for Meer Cossim and his servants but to oppose violence by authority, and force by force. Whatever the bad conduct of the English, more especially of their chief officers, and the majority by whom the governor was opposed in council, the policy of many of the soubahdar's chief officers was aggravating and unjust. As illustrating this, a single case may be named. At Luckypoor one Mohammed Gazy had been employed in the service of the English factory. To punish this person for his attachment to the English, and probably also with the view of insulting the English themselves, the soubahdar's officer, Syed Buddul Cawn, placed a guard upon his house. Mr. Middleton, chief of the factory, remonstrated upon the oppression thus practised upon a person whose only offence was his intimate service with the English. The native officer refused to release the person so flagrantly wronged, and pleaded that his doing so would be against superior orders—those of Mohammed Allee, who had offered many provocations to the English, and always managed badly his part in those disputes when the English were the aggressors. The council ordered Mr. Middleton to cause Syed Buddul Cawn to be seized and sent a prisoner to Calcutta, where he arrived the latter end of March, 1763. He exculpated himself when before the board, by producing the orders on which he had acted. Mohammed Allee's letter was of such a nature as left no doubt of his desire to bring matters to an extremity. Whether this arose from some interested speculation, or from the vanity which led the native chiefs, notwithstanding innumerable defeats, to believe that they could contend with the English, his motives were sufficiently powerful to induce him to defy the company and impose upon the soubahdar by giving him false information. That this was the true state of the case, the orders issued by him to Syed Buddul Cawn sufficiently prove. They were in the following terms:—



*From Mohammed Allee to Syed Buddul Cawn.*

Your agreeable letter is arrived. I fully understand the particulars contained therein, and from the hircarra likewise, I learned the account of the villanies of the English in Luckypoör. I have written pressingly to Aga Mohammed Nizam, and Samadan, and Aumur Sing, and Jungul Sing, to repair all of them with their people unto you. I have also sent perwannahs, with the utmost dispatch, unto the zemindars of Bilwat, Baboopoor, &c., and I have taken engagements from every zemindar's vakeel, about Luckypoör, that their masters, the zemindars, will attend upon you, and act as you shall direct them. It behoves you, with the utmost dispatch, to repair thither immediately, and blockade the passages for going in and coming out on all sides of Luckypoör; and place strong sentinels, that no person whatever may pass or repass to and from Luckypoör, and that asoul does not escape. Of those who claim the English protection, and make use of their name, take two or three and crucify them, and seize their houses and effects. Lay hold of their wives and children, and send them straightway to me. Be sure not to fail in this respect, his excellency having honoured me with his orders to this purpose, as you must be informed from the copy of the governor's engagement, and of his excellency's perwannah, in consequence, which I heretofore sent you; and do not entertain the least diffidence. Regard this my short letter in the light of a thousand letters, and act accordingly. Moreover, let guards be placed to keep a good look-out about Luckypoör, and the parts adjacent, until the nabob's orders arrive, when they will proceed to act as I shall write to you. At present surround it on all sides, and keep a constant watch.

You will take extraordinary good care of the Europeans at Luckypoör, that they get no intelligence from any of their dependents, either by land or water; and for security you will send two hundred men, with a commander whom you can rely upon, and direct them, above all things, to be ready for action both night and day.

The consequences of such proceedings were thus noticed by Mr. Vansittart himself, in the *exposé* of his motives and conduct in these affairs, afterwards given by him:—"Such a declaration of his inveteracy to the English, as was expressed in these letters of Mohammed Allee's, and the many instances which he had given of it throughout his whole conduct, from his first appointment, justly excited the indignation of the whole board. The most violent readily seized this occasion to infer a fixed resolution in the nabob to break with us; and that the appointment of such a man as Mohammed Allee, with such extraordinary powers, and his conduct in the execution of them, were only in consequence of that resolution. It was, therefore, warmly urged to prevent the nabob's designs by declaring immediate war against him. This sentiment, however, was opposed by a majority of the board, who judged it most proper, in the present circumstances, to regard the insults as proceeding personally from Mohammed Allee, and to chastise him for it ourselves; since the nabob, to whom we had repeatedly complained against him, had hitherto afforded us no re-

dress; and that the chief and council at Dacca should be ordered to seize, and send him down prisoner to Calcutta. In this alternative I easily joined, as well in the hopes of yet preventing a ruinous and unjustifiable war, as from the conviction of the violent and incendiary spirit of Mohammed Allee; who, if suffered to act longer with impunity, I saw would put it out of my power, or even of the nabob's, to preserve peace between us. It is true that the nabob, in answer to the demand of the board for his dismissal, declared that he had removed him from his employment, and summoned him to his presence; but as he still continued at Dacca, and the nabob had always endeavoured to vindicate his conduct, it was much to be feared that he would not only escape the punishment he deserved, but perhaps be continued in his authority, and have his hands strengthened with such fresh powers as might make it dangerous to attempt afterwards to call him to an account. The nabob's behaviour upon this occasion may be easily accounted for, from the precarious situation in which he stood with the English. When I was with him at Mongheer, he assured me that if the complaints which were then alleged against Mohammed Allee, upon inquiry, proved true, he would both dismiss him from his service, and severely punish him. The same assurance he gave me with respect to Sheer Allee, the fougadar of Poorneea, who had been guilty of the like enmity and misbehaviour to the English dependants in that district; and it is very probable that he was sincere in this declaration at that time, since his interest was most materially concerned in removing every cause of disagreement from between us. But when he perceived the strong opposition formed against him by the general assembly of the council, and that the design of his enemies was levelled openly against his person and government, it is not to be wondered at that he should be cautious of depriving himself of the assistance of persons the most capable of serving him, and on whose zeal he had so much reason to depend in case of a rupture with the English. In a word, it appears from the nabob's whole behaviour, from the time that the general council was assembled, that he believed his own ruin to be the object of that assembly; and every step taken by the board served but to confirm him the more strongly in that fatal persuasion. Fatal I call it, since, with such a mutual distrust, every accident, however trifling, was easily construed into an intentional act of hostility; and even the necessary precautions of self-defence served but to make the breach irreparable. I believe it will be needless to point out instances of the effects of these pre-



possessions, amongst the many which occur in the minutes of the council, and the nabob's letters which I have already inserted. To the latter I shall add one, as it shows how easily the nabob was led away by every groundless report, and how naturally his apprehensions disposed him to co-operate with the very measures which tended to an open rupture.\*

A deputation was sent by the council from Calcutta to wait upon the soubahdar, and come, if possible, to a mutual understanding. His highness declined receiving the deputation, unless the council recalled the troops which he alleged had been marching from various directions towards his capital. At that time Mr. Vansittart declared not a soldier had moved from his quarters. The soubahdar had been inspired by his officers, who vainly supposed that by a vigorous effort the English authority might be shaken off. This they were the more readily led to believe, because it was supposed by them that the sepoys in the English service were disloyal, and that the people were so exasperated by the bad conduct of the company's servants, that they were ripe for insurrection.

While the soubahdar was giving implicit credit to every story to the disparagement of the English, the latter, Mr. Vansittart declared, were quite as credulous. Even the council believed representations made to them that the soubahdar had issued orders for all the mulberry-trees to be cut down, in order to destroy the silk trade; and for all the cotton plants to be uprooted, in order to destroy the trade in white cloths. This belief was grounded upon the supposition that as the English refused to pay duties except on salt, the trade with them was valueless to his highness, and no motive for desiring their presence in India any longer remained. The governor treated those rumours as idle and absurd, but the council resolved to act upon them, and to adopt violent measures, which the governor could only restrain to a certain degree by his authority. The whole behaviour of the council in these matters appears upon the evidence of the minutes in council to be what the governor described it, "scandalous and indecent." In fact, the interest of the company, national honour, the faith of treaties, were all lost sight of in order to accomplish what the grasping avarice of the majority of the council desired. One thing only may be alleged as plausible in behalf of the majority of the council. The president himself (Mr. Vansittart) traded on his private account, and the council believed

that in matters of revenue the soubahdar favoured him, and therefore it was his private interest that the company and individual members of council should be subject to duties from which he, by private management, was able to have himself exempted. The president solemnly denied the truth of these imputations. There were various circumstances which, at all events, naturally led the council to suspect that the private interests of the governor were adverse to those of the council.

Mainly by the governor's influence, the soubahdar consented to receive the deputation from the council, notwithstanding his previous refusals. He, however, intimated plainly his opinion that the interview could result in no good, as it would be impossible for him to exercise any authority as soubahdar of Bengal while the company treated his orders with contempt, and plundered and ill-used his people as they pleased. His highness could see nothing to negotiate about, for he declared that the English had not left him anything worth the trouble. If they wished to seize upon what belonged to some one else, they had better do so without a deputation to him; or, if the appearance of negotiation was a formality necessary to English measures, he thought they might find somebody else with whom to go through that form, and spare him the torment. Such was the reasoning of his highness, and the bitter irony it contained vexed the English excessively. The nabob, however, met the deputation; but, meanwhile, Ellis, the chief of the English factory at Patna, and the other agents of the company there, did everything in their power to bring on a war for their own private objects, so that the interview began under most inauspicious circumstances. The deputation conducted itself haughtily; the soubahdar petulantly. His highness equivocated and evaded, and it afterwards appeared that he preferred the chances of war to compliance with the demands made to him. The deputation effected nothing. They showed no disposition to concede anything to conciliate the nizam, as he liked to call himself, and his exasperation was increased by their visit. While they were yet at the court of the soubahdar, some boats with arms arrived on their way to Patna for the use of the English troops there. These were seized, and his highness refused to release them, grounding his refusal on the alleged belief that the arms and ammunition were intended to enable the garrison near Patna to attack that city. He also refused a new demand, that an English agent should reside permanently at his durbar, to prevent disputes from arising for the future. The

\* *Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal, from 1760 to 1764.*



grand point of difference was the demand of the English that no native merchant should be exempted from heavy duties, while they should be exempt from imposts of every kind except such as they chose to grant.

It soon became evident that the soubahdar had been quietly, but vigorously, making preparations for war, but had resolved not to begin the conflict; his purpose being to enter upon hostilities as soon as he was attacked. The council eagerly seized the occasion presented by the irritated and ill-advised conduct of the soubahdar to force matters to an extreme pass. The governor disapproved of these proceedings, but did not display either the wisdom or decision requisite for counteracting them. Warren Hastings alone withstood the self-assertion, insolence, and aggrandizement of the council. At every meeting he was eloquent on the side of moderation and justice, and his protests against the folly and tyranny of the council are masterpieces of Indian policy and statesmanship. While yet the deputation remained at the court of the soubahdar, he began to offer a series of vindictive provocations which could not fail to issue in war. His "chokies" insulted the deputation of council. Bodies of horse were thrown out for the purpose of intercepting their departure, and finally the sepoys in the English service were tampered with by the soubahdar's agents, until they deserted by hundreds; and the native officers, so much relied upon by the English of that day, were amongst the first who yielded to seduction. This last circumstance compelled the English at once to take measures which the soubahdar considered as nearly tantamount to a declaration of hostilities. He demanded that the English troops should be removed from Patna to Calcutta, or to his own immediate neighbourhood, and informed the deputation that peace or war depended upon compliance with that demand. It became obvious that he had never seriously intended to negotiate on the subject of the duties, and that his compliant policy was merely to gain time to secure his military position and ally to himself the talookdars and zemindars of his own and contiguous territories. His next step was to seize Mr. Hay, as security for certain monies which he insisted the English possessed, but which belonged to him. After this, he proposed in a letter to the governor, that if Mr. Ellis were removed from the chiefship of the factory at Patna, he would negotiate. Before the governor would introduce the subject to the council, Mr. Ellis commenced hostilities, and soon after the chiefs of other English factories adopted aggressive measures, on the plea of necessity. It was now plain that

war had begun. Mr. Ellis, the chief at Patna, backed by the majority of the council at Calcutta, had begun it. The next step was to depose Meer Cossim by order of council, and proclaim another soubahdar in his room. The choice of the council fell upon their old friend and enemy, Meer Jaffier. The whole council favoured this action, except the governor and Mr. Hastings. Advices arrived from Mr. Amyatt from Mongheer, where the soubahdar was, that an Armenian general had marched at the head of a strong reinforcement of "horse, foot, and cannon," to Patna, and that "the Armenians solely managed the soubahdar, and urged the disputes." Mr. Amyatt left the court of the soubahdar under passport, and advised the council of his arrival at Sootee *en route* for Calcutta, where he was daily expected. Soon after a letter reached the governor from Cossimbazar, informing the council that as Mr. Amyatt was passing the city of Moorshedabad, he was attacked by the soubahdar's forces and killed, with several other gentlemen; his escort having been made prisoners. The day after this intelligence was received, some servants and soldiers who had escaped during the skirmish of Moorshedabad arrived at Calcutta. They brought the information that the English at Patna had begun the war, and the attack on Mr. Amyatt at Moorshehabad was in reprisal. The council at once, July 7th, 1763, nominated Meer Jaffier to the soubahdarship, declaring war against Meer Cossim.

On the 8th of July a letter from Meer Cossim confirmed the rumours of active hostilities at Patna. On the 24th of June the English suddenly attacked the city of Patna at night, and took it by surprise. As soon as the capture was made, a plunder of the city commenced, and so great was the disorder of the British, that a small body of the soubahdar's troops entered the city at noon next day and retook it, putting the plunderers to the sword. The gentlemen of the factory, with the scattered remains of the army, retired across the river, and were all destroyed or captured. The letter of the soubahdar was one of sneering irony, in which he makes the defeat of the violent gang of robbers who managed the affairs of the company at Patna a ground for demanding the restitution of all the lands of the soubahdarree surrendered by him to the company on his accession to power. His highness conceived himself to be strong enough to make any demands, as the force at Patna constituted the chief English garrison of Bengal, and formed a considerable portion of the whole of the English army in that presidency.

The following extract from the letter of the



soubahdar showed how hopeless it would have been to maintain any further relations with him:—

*Copy of a Letter from the Nabob Cossim Allee Cawn to the Governor. Dated June 28, 1763.*

In my heart I believed Mr. Ellis to be my inveterate enemy, but from his actions, I now find he was inwardly my friend, as appears by this step, which he has added to the others. Like a night robber, he assaulted the Kella of Patna; robbed and plundered the bazar, and all the merchants and inhabitants of the city, ravaging and slaying from the morning to the third pahr (afternoon). When I requested of you two or three hundred muskets laden in boats, you would not consent to it. This unhappy man, in consequence of his inward friendship,\* favoured me, in this fray and slaughter, with all the muskets and cannon of his army, and is himself relieved and eased from his burthen. Since it was never my desire to injure the affairs of the company, whatever loss may have been occasioned by this unhappy man to myself, in this tumult, I pass over: but you, gentlemen, must answer for any injury which the company's affairs have suffered; and since you have unjustly and cruelly ravaged the city, and destroyed the people, and plundered effects to the value of lacs of rupees; it becomes the justice of the company to make reparation to the poor, as formerly was done for Calcutta. You, gentlemen, are wonderful friends; having made a treaty, to which you pledged the name of Jesus Christ, you took from me a country to pay the expenses of your army, with the condition, that your troops should always attend me, and promote my affairs. In effect, you keep up a force for my destruction; since from their hand, such events have proceeded, I am entirely of opinion, that the company should favour me in causing to be delivered to me the rents for three years of my country. Besides this, for the violences and oppressions exercised by the English gomastahs for several years past, in the territories of the Nizamut, and the large sums extorted, and the losses occasioned by them, it is proper and just that the company make restitution at this time. This is all the trouble you need take; in the same manner as you took Bardwan and the other lands, you must favour me in resigning them.

Mr. Vansittart observes in his narrative, that "This was followed by a note from the gentlemen at Cossimbazar, dated the night of the 4th of July, informing us that the factory was surrounded by a numerous force, and that they expected an attack the next morning."

Mr. Hastings had been so disgusted with the trickery, selfishness, and injustice of the council, that he had resolved to resign his high and honourable place as a member of council. His patriotism, however, became influenced by what he called "the unparalleled acts of barbarity and treachery" with which, on the part of the nabob, the war had opened; and he resolved to give his energies to carry the conflict to a successful issue. It is surprising that Mr. Hastings should consider the acts of Meer Cossim, however barbarous and treacherous, unparalleled in Indian warfare; they were

\* This language is used sarcastically, and betrays the intense bitterness of the soubahdar.

simply in character with Mohammedan usages in war in India and everywhere else. Meer Jaffier left Calcutta on the 11th of July, 1763, to join the army. The detachment he accompanied was commanded by Major Williams. On the 19th the soubahdar's army engaged the British, for the purpose of defending the Fort of Kutwal, which, it was supposed, might be best defended in the open field. The troops of his highness were defeated, and Kutwal was abandoned. On the 26th the British stormed the lines of Moote-gil, and captured Moorshedabad; about fifty pieces of cannon were among the trophies. On the 2nd of August a perilous exploit was performed by the English. They crossed a dangerous ravine defended by strong outposts of the enemy. These outposts were driven back, and the British, advancing, found the grand army of the soubahdar drawn up in line of battle upon the plains of Geriah, near Sootee. The British attacked with their usual spirit, and the enemy resisted with unusual obstinacy. For a time the battle appeared to be equal. In a desperate charge by the Bengalees the English line was broken, and some of their cannon captured. The Rajah Shitabroy distinguished himself with his accustomed gallantry on the side of the English, encouraging the native troops in their service. The British having recovered the temporary reverse, which had nearly cost them the loss of the day, they renewed their assaults with persevering valour, until at last the exhausted enemy fled, leaving the field covered with their slain, and all their cannon and baggage as prizes to the victors. An immediate result of the victory was the capture of a hundred and fifty boats freighted with grain and rice.

The soubahdar's forces continued their disorderly flight to Ouhtanulla, a fort between the river and a chain of hills. This place was defended by an intrenchment, upon which were mounted a hundred pieces of cannon. The ditch was more than fifty feet wide, of considerable depth, and full of water. In front was a quagmire. The only ground upon which an assaulting force could approach was near the river, for the space of one hundred yards. The English there planted batteries and raised works, with the most studied appearance of conducting a regular system of approaches. The object of these proceedings was to draw off the enemy's attention from the real plan of attack. On the 5th of September a fire was opened from the false attack, and such demonstrations made as drew away a large body of the besieged to that quarter; while the English in another direction began the assault. There were



troops enough in that quarter to make an obstinate defence; and only after a furious and sanguinary contest were the English masters of the fort and all its appurtenances of war.

The British have made few conquests in India so creditable to their arms. Their entire force scarcely exceeded three thousand; the enemy were many times that number, and the English officers computed them at sixty thousand. The English having secured the place, advanced to Mongheer. After every victory they obtained some native adherents to their standard, as they professed to fight for the restoration of a former sovereign, who, although not popular, had adherents.

Meer Cossim fled, leaving a garrison to defend his capital. Here he proved himself to be as bloody-minded as his predecessors, and as Mohammedan rulers generally are. He put to death several of his own relations, who, he supposed, might be made instruments in the hands of the English in consolidating a rival authority. Ramnarain was drowned with a bag of sand round his neck.

As the soubahdar fled to Patna, his thirst for blood increased. The two bankers, Set or Seit, the richest men in India, were both murdered in a manner horribly vindictive. His vengeance pursued their dead bodies, which were given to wild beasts and birds of prey, lest their friends should raise for them a funeral pyre, after the manner of the Hindoos. When the English army advanced, their bones were found in a retired apartment of a house, where they had been secreted by some of their co-religionists.

The English conquered Mongheer, but not until a practicable breach was made. The war under Adams had been conducted humanely. After the victory at Oodwa Nulla, in which the abettors of the soubahdar were so signally defeated, one thousand prisoners were made, among whom were many Mohammedan gentlemen, officers in the army of his highness. The whole of these Adams generously released.

On the 9th of September, as the major advanced to Patna, the soubahdar wrote to him thence, threatening to kill all the English who had fallen into his hands if the major did not abandon the war. That officer replied that the war must be carried on whatever were the consequences, and that it rested with his highness whether it should be waged humanely or become a war of sanguinary reprisals. The governor wrote to the same effect, but neither the mild remonstrance of the latter nor the threats of the commander had any weight with Cossim. He ordered all the prisoners in his power to be massacred. Ellis,

by whom the war had been provoked, and who signally merited retribution, with fourteen of the company's civil and military servants, various other gentlemen, and a hundred private men, were murdered. On a previous page the gallantry of Dr. Fullerton was recorded. This officer was the only person who escaped the massacre. He saw Meer Cossim immediately afterwards, and he wrote to the board a letter, from which the following is an extract:—"Mr. Ellis, with the rest of the gentlemen, was inhumanly butchered by Shimroo,\* who came that evening to the place with two companies (he had the day before sent for all the knives and forks from the gentlemen); he surrounded the house with his people, and went into a little outer square, and sent for Messrs. Ellis, Hay,† and Lushington, and with them came six other gentlemen, who were all terribly mangled, and cut to pieces, and their bodies thrown into a well in the square, and it filled up; then the sepoys were sent into the large square, and fired on the gentlemen there, and, rushing upon them, cut them into pieces, in the most inhuman manner, and they were thrown into another large well, which was likewise filled up. On the 7th the nabob sent for me, and told me to get myself in readiness to go to Calcutta, for that though he had been unlucky in the war (which he asserted with great warmth, had not been of his seeking, nor had he been the aggressor, reproaching the English with want of fidelity, and breach of treaty), yet he said he had still hopes of an accommodation; he asked me what I thought of it. I told him, I made no doubt of it. When some of his people, who were present, mentioned the affair of Mr. Amyatt's death; he declared that he had never given any orders for killing Mr. Amyatt; but, after receiving advice of Mr. Ellis's having attacked Patna, he had ordered all his servants to take and imprison all the English in the provinces, wherever they could find them; he likewise added, that if a treaty was not set afoot, he would bring the king, the Mahrattas, and Abdallees against us, and so ruin our trade, &c. He had finished his letters, and ordered boats, and a guard to conduct me; when, upon the advice of some of his people, he stopped me, and said there was no occasion for me to go. After his sending for me at first, he ordered the sepoys, in

\* A Frenchman in Meer Cossim's service. His highness had engaged with the English to keep no French in his service.

† This gentleman had been one of the deputation from the council; his detention and murder was an act of barbarous perfidy which classes the name of Meer Cossim with Suraj-ad-Dowlah, Meeran, and others of the most bloody and barbarous Mohammedan rulers in India.



whose charge I was, to go to their quarters; two moguls and twelve hircarras to attend me, but to let me go about the city where I pleased. I then applied for liberty to stay at the Dutch factory, which was granted. I applied to Mehdee Allee Khan, for his interest in behalf of the gentlemen in the Chelston, who were seven in number, and were not killed till the 11th of October; but when he was petitioned about them, he gave no answer; but still sent orders to Shimroo to cut them off. I likewise applied to Allee Ibrahim Cawn, who interceded for them; but he gave him no answer either, though I was present when Ibrahim Cawn petitioned for them. On the 14th of October, on the approach of our army, Cossim Allee decamped with his troops in great confusion, and marched as far as Fulwarree, five coss to the westward of the city. The hircarras that were with me, having no orders about me, I gave them some money, which made them pretty easy. On the 25th, after giving money to a jemantdar, that had the guard to the westward of the Dutch factory, by the river side, I set out in a small pulwar, and got safe to the boats, under command of Captain Wedderburn, that were lying opposite to the city, on the other side of the river, and at eleven o'clock that night arrived at the army, under the command of Major Adams, lying at Jonsy."

Of course nothing can be written in extenuation of this foul and wholesale murder, resembling so much the sanguinary horrors of Cawnpore, when, in 1857, the Nana Sahib committed a similar massacre; but the soubahdar had much to provoke revenge. His hoarded wrongs found an escape when the very persons who were the chief instruments in inflicting them were in his power. He well knew that through his enemy the Rajah Shita-

broy, Mr. Ellis and Major Carnac, without the knowledge of the governor, had carried on secret correspondence with the emperor and his vizier, with the object of the soubahdar's dethronement. For this purpose Ellis's complaints of fictitious grievances were made to the council; and temptations were created by him for the soubahdar, or his officers, to do some precipitate acts which would necessitate war. It is difficult not to believe that Ellis and others, his equals in rank, were bribed by the Nabob of Oude to bring about, if possible, a rupture between the English and the soubahdar, that the latter might be committed to hostilities, and some members of the house of Delhi, or the vizier himself, be enabled, through the turmoil, to reach the musnid. He was, at all events, anxious for his own purposes, both to weaken the power of the English and keep the soubahdarree of Bengal disturbed. Mr. Ellis and his confederates in intrigue had known this well, but all considerations seemed to be lost sight of by them, except the accumulation of money by whatever means.

Patna was stormed on the 6th of November, and the war against Meer Cossim was prosecuted with renewed ardour. The British, under Major Adams, met with their usual success. In five months after the formal commencement of hostilities Meer Cossim was driven beyond the Caramnassa. The loss of the British in accomplishing this success was very small, except at the massacre at Patna. Several gallant officers, however, fell in different places, and the senior member of council, Mr. Amyatt, perished at Moorshedabad, as already related, with several other civilians of position. Meer Cossim, accompanied by the odious Shimroo, sought the protection of the Nabob of Oude.

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

WAR WITH THE NABOB OF OUDE—RUIN OF MEER COSSIM—DEATH OF MEER JAFFIER—THE ENGLISH PLACE NUJUM-AD-DOWLAH UPON THE MUSNID OF BENGAL—HUMILIATION OF NUNDCOOMAR, THE MINISTER OF JAFFIER—DISORGANIZATION OF ENGLISH AFFAIRS IN BENGAL—CORRUPT PRACTICES OF THE COUNCIL—APPOINTMENT OF CLIVE AS GOVERNOR—NEW SETTLEMENT OF AFFAIRS IN BENGAL.

MEER JAFFIER was now once more upon the musnid of the soubahdarree. It is important to review the terms upon which he was reinstated. Before he left Calcutta to join the army, upon which devolved the task of expelling his son-in-law and exalting himself, considerable negotiations were necessary to induce him to comply with some of the

demands which had been previously made upon Meer Cossim. At heart the former approved the policy of the latter. Meer Jaffier regarded the conduct of the English throughout as unjust, and contrary to the treaty. After all his intrigues with the council, he betrayed no eagerness to reach the throne of which his relative was so soon to be deprived.



The council, pressed by the exigencies of the crisis, gave way to his demands, and a treaty was finally made. As this formed the basis of the relations of the English to the soubahdar of Bengal, so long as such an officer was permitted to exist, it will throw light upon the future proceedings of both parties.

*On the part of the Company.*

We engage to reinstate the nabob Meer Mohammed Jaffier Cawn in the soubahdarree of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, by the deposal of Meer Mohammed Cossim Cawn; and the effects, treasure, jewels, &c., belonging to Meer Mohammed Cossim Cawn, which shall fall into our hands, shall be delivered up to the nabob afore-named.

*On the part of the Nabob.*

First, That the treaty which I formerly concluded with the company, upon my accession to the nizamat, engaging to regard the honour and reputation of the company, their governor, and council, as my own, granting perwannabs for the currency of the company's trade, the same treaty I now confirm and ratify.

Secondly, I do grant and confirm to the company, for defraying the expenses of their troops, the chuclas of Burdwan, Midnapoor, and Chittagong, which were before ceded for the same purpose.

Thirdly, I do ratify and confirm to the English the privilege granted them by their firman, and several husbulhookums, of carrying on their trade by means of their own dustucks, free from all duties, taxes, and impositions, in all parts of the country, excepting the article of salt, on which a duty of two and a half per cent. is to be levied on the Rowana or Hoogly market price.

Fourthly, I give to the company half the saltpetre which is produced in the country of Poorneea, which their gomastahs shall send to Calcutta, the other half shall be collected by my fougedar, for the use of my offices; and I will suffer no other person to make purchases of this article in that country.

Fifthly, In the chucla of Silhet, for the space of five years, commencing with the Bengal year 1170, my fougedar, and the company's gomastah, shall jointly prepare chunam, of which each shall defray half the expenses; and half the chunam so made shall be given to the company, and the other half shall be for my use.

Sixthly, I will maintain twelve thousand horse and twelve thousand foot in the three provinces; and if there should be occasion for more, the number shall be increased proportionably to the emergency. Besides these, the force of the English company shall always attend me when they are wanted.

Seventhly, Wherever I shall fix my court, either at Moorshedabad or elsewhere, I will advise the governor and council; and whatever number of English forces I may have occasion for, in the management of my affairs, I will demand them, and they shall be allowed me; and an English gentleman shall reside with me, to transact all affairs between me and the company; and a person shall also reside on my part at Calcutta, to negotiate with the governor and council.

Eighthly, The late perwannah issued by Cossim Allee Cawn, granting to all merchants the exemption of all duties, for the space of two years, shall be reversed and called in, and the duties collected as before.

Ninthly, I will cause the rupees coined in Calcutta to pass in every respect equal to the siccas of Moorshedabad, without any deduction of batta; and whosoever shall demand batta shall be punished.

Tenthly, I will give thirty lacs of rupees to defray all the expenses and loss accruing to the company from the

war and stoppage of their investment; and I will reimburse to all private persons the amount of all such losses, proved before the governor and council, as they may sustain in their trade in the country; if I should not be able to discharge this in ready money, I will give assignments of land for the amount.

Eleventhly, I will confirm and renew the treaty which I formerly made with the Dutch.

Twelfthly, If the French come into the country, I will not allow them to erect any fortifications, maintain forces, or hold lands, zemindarrees, &c., but they shall pay tribute, and carry on their trade as in former times.

Thirteenthly, Some regulations shall be hereafter settled between us, for deciding all disputes which may arise between the English agents and gomastahs in the different parts of the country, and my officers.

In testimony whereof, we the said governor and council have set our hands, and affixed the seal of the company to one part hereof; and the nabob afore-named hath set his hand and seal to another part hereof; which were mutually done and interchanged at Fort William, the 10th day of July, 1764.

HENRY VANSITTART,	WARREN HASTINGS,
JOHN CARNAC,	RANDOLPH MARRIOT,
WILLIAM BILLERS,	HUGH WATTS.
JOHN CARTIER,	

*Demands made on the part of the Nabob Meer Jaffier, to the Governor and Council, at the time of signing the Treaty.*

First, I formerly acquainted the company with the particulars of my own affairs, and received from them repeated letters of encouragement with presents. I now make this request, that you will write in a proper manner to the company, and also to the King of England, the particulars of our friendship and union; and procure for me writings of encouragement, that my mind may be assured from that quarter, that no breach may ever happen between me and the English; and that every governor and councillor, and chief, who are here, or may hereafter come, may be well disposed and attached to me.

Secondly, Since all the English gentlemen, assured of my friendly disposition to the company, confirm me in the nizamat; I request, that to whatever I may at any time write, they will give their credit and assent, nor regard the stories of designing men to my prejudice, that all my affairs may go on with success, and no occasion may arise for jealousy or ill-will between us.

Thirdly, Let no protection be given, by any of the English gentlemen, to any of my dependents who may fly for shelter to Calcutta, or other of your districts; but let them be delivered up to me on demand. I shall strictly enjoin all my fougedars and aumils, on all accounts to afford assistance and countenance to such of the gomastahs of the company as attend to the lawful trade of their factories; and if any of the said gomastahs shall act otherwise, let them be checked in such a manner as may be an example to others.

Fourthly, From the neighbourhood of Calcutta to Hoogly, and many of the pergunahs, bordering upon each other, it happens, that, on complaints being made, people go against the talookdars, reiat, and tenants of my towns, to the prejudice of the business of the circar; wherefore, let strict orders be given, that no peons be sent from Calcutta on the complaint of any one, upon my talookdars or tenants; but on such occasions, let application be made to me, or the naib of the fougedarree of Hoogly, that the country may be subject to no loss or devastation. And if any of the merchants and traders which belonged to the buxbunder and azimgunge, and have settled in Calcutta, should be desirous of returning to Hoogly, and carrying on their business there as formerly, let no one molest them. Chandernagore, and the



French factory, was presented to me by Colonel Clive, and given by me in charge to Ameer Beg Cawn. For this reason, let strict orders be given, that no English gentlemen exercise any authority therein, but that it remain as formerly, under the jurisdiction of my people.

Fifthly, Whenever I may demand any forces from the governor and council for my assistance, let them be immediately sent to me, and no demand made on me for their expenses.

The demands of the nabob Shujaoool Moolk Hissam on Dowla Meer Mohammed Jaffier Cawn Behader Mohabut Jung, written in five articles. We the president and council of the English company do agree, and set our hands to, in Fort William, the 10th of July, 1763.

\* Signed, &c.

Mr. Vansittart, as governor, carried out the policy of the committee. That policy, although successful, brought several members of their own body to a miserable end, and involved their chief partizans in similar destruction. Mr. Vansittart resolved to leave Bengal, but was detained by the dangerous intrigues of Meer Cossim beyond its borders, and the desire of the council that he should remain until the province was settled down in orderly government and external peace. When Meer Cossim crossed the Caramnassa, the emperor and his vizier were encamped near Allahabad. Thither the expelled viceroy repaired, and was ostentatiously received. He importuned his majesty to make war upon the English, but the vizier did not immediately act upon such counsel. He then begged the vizier himself, as Nabob of Oude, to make a grand effort for the expulsion of the English. His highness excused himself on the ground of disturbances in Bundelcund. Meer Cossim adroitly offered to put them down. His offer was accepted, and he was more fortunate than in his war with the English. So pleased was the nabob with the courage and energy of the exiled prince, that he agreed to march upon Bahar, and endeavour to deprive the English of that province. Meanwhile, the emperor and vizier pretended to the English that Meer Cossim should be formally stripped of his power by an imperial decree, and his person surrendered to the governor of Bengal. The English, doubtful of the good faith of the native princes, marched troops to the banks of the Caramnassa. Several complications arose of a serious nature to frustrate their military plans. Major Adams resigned his command, and soon after died. Major (late Captain) Knox was compelled also to resign by ill health. Major Carnac at last was placed in charge of the army. The sepoys, who had for some time shown a mutinous spirit on occasions when their grievances were imaginary, or if real, before there was time for their investigation and redress, deserted in

\* Majors Adams and Carnac absent.

great numbers to the enemy, and had the cause of the Nabob of Oude more at heart than those whose salt they eat. Open disobedience of orders was common on the part of those who did not desert. This caused extreme trepidation at Calcutta, and means were taken to soothe the irritation of the hireling soldiery. There were, however, a number of French deserters in the English pay, and these fomented the disturbance, so as almost to destroy the British sepoy contingent. It was found that Meer Jaffier was as much disinclined to go to war for English purposes as Meer Cossim himself could have been, and was in fact a less manageable instrument against foreign aggression. Major Carnac was ordered by the council to cross the Caramnassa and attack the enemy; but with his disaffected French and sepoys he could not pursue a bold policy, and therefore acted only upon the defensive, which tended to dishearten such of the sepoys as remained obedient, who had been accustomed to see the English strike boldly for power. At length Carnac retreated to Patna. The enemy followed, and on the 13th of May, 1764, attacked the British. A long conflict ensued, and at the close of day the enemy was repulsed. The emperor offered to negotiate on the basis of Meer Jaffier's surrender of Bahar. The English not only refused, but demanded that Meer Cossim should be given up, the French (or Swiss as he was supposed by some to be) murderer Shimroo, and the sepoy deserters. Nothing came of these mutual demands. Major Carnac menacing the enemy's flank, he precipitately retired into Oude.

The council at Calcutta, mischievous and incompetent as ever, censured Major Carnac because he did not lead the army, which had fought so well on the 13th of May, into the enemy's territory. That experienced commander declared that only by expedients and extraordinary vigilance could disaffection in his ranks be subdued, and had he led his army into Oude it would have disbanded. The fact was, the Mohammedan sepoys regarded both the Emperor and Nabob of Oude with a religious reverence, which made them unwilling to fight against them; yet, on the day of battle, the *esprit de corps* common to soldiers kept them in action until victory was obtained: many who fought well deserted after. Major Carnac was unjustly and unwisely superseded, and the command given to Major Munro. Happily this officer was competent to the duty imposed upon him, but it might have been otherwise, and the injustice to Major Carnac, like other acts of the council, might have been followed by a speedy retribution. Major Munro found the whole of the



native force at Patna mutinous. The major adopted the policy of his predecessor, by first endeavouring to subdue the mutinous state of his own forces before attacking those of the enemy. The day he assumed the command, a battalion of sepoy with their arms and accoutrements set out to join the enemy. One hundred Europeans, a company of sepoy, whose officers reported them trustworthy, and two field-pieces were sent in pursuit of the deserters. They were overtaken by night while asleep, and not having placed sentinels, were surprised, disarmed, and taken prisoners. Fifty were selected for execution, and were blown away from guns. This deprives them of caste, and is regarded as a most severe punishment. The native troops in garrison refused to allow more than four of the men to be executed, but Munro loaded his guns with grape, drew up his Europeans in the intervals between his ordnance, and commanded the sepoy to ground their arms; the whole party originally sentenced were executed, and the mutiny was completely quelled. Thus early in the history of our occupation of India was mutiny displayed, and thus early was it shown by a man of vigour how to suppress it.

On the 15th of September active operations commenced. The enemy disputed the passage of the Soam, but were dispersed in a masterly manner by Major Champion, an officer acting under Munro. At Buxar, Major Munro came up with the enemy in full force. A grand battle was fought, and a glorious victory obtained by the British. As the enemy retreated, a small river, the passage of which was covered by a bridge of boats, lay in the line of march. Before the rear of his army had crossed, the vizier destroyed the bridge and sacrificed two thousand of his men. Munro's opinion of this act was afterwards given in the following terms:—"The best piece of generalship Sujah-ad-Dowlah showed that day; because, if I had crossed the rivulet with the army, I would either have taken or drowned his whole army in the Caramnassa, and come up with his treasure and jewels and Cossim Ali Khan's jewels, which, I was informed, amounted to between two and three millions."\* Besides those lost in the river, the battle of Buxar cost the imperial army two thousand men left dead upon the field of battle, many wounded prisoners, and one hundred and thirty-three pieces of cannon. The strength of the army was variously estimated from forty to sixty thousand men. The British numbered 7772 men, of whom more than eight hundred were placed *hors de combat*. The English acted with compassion to the wounded. On the

day after the battle the major received a letter from the emperor congratulating him on his victory, declaring that the vizier held him in constraint, and imploring the major to lend him his assistance. Great was the astonishment of the British commander at the receipt of such a communication. Munro marched towards Benares; the emperor marched in the same direction. He found means to communicate with the English commander, offering to depose the Nabob of Oude and confer his territory upon the English, if the latter would only assist him against the nabob, who, as his vizier, had the real direction of affairs. He craved an interview. The major received from Calcutta directions favourable to the emperor, and avoided any molestation of his own personal guards. Meer Cossim was also anxious to escape the vizier, who demanded payment of subsidy, and also the emperor's tribute, neither of which the ex-soubahdar could pay. To convince his inexorable persecutor of this, he laid by his state and assumed the garb and mode of life of a Mohammedan devotee. As this was a reflection upon the hospitality of a Mohammedan prince, the vizier besought Meer Cossim to resume his princely style. Meanwhile, the troops who had followed the fortunes of the latter became clamorous for pay, and his highness parted with his hoarded gold for the purpose, but resolved to get rid of an army which could be of no use to him. Shimroo, the French or Swiss mercenary, who had been the executioner at the massacre at Patna, headed the rioters. This general and the troops went over to the vizier, taking their arms and artillery with them. Thornton represents this transfer as having taken place before the battle of Buxar; other writers describe it as one of the consequences of that battle.

The vizier deliberately plundered the unfortunate Cossim of all his valuables, except some jewels which he secreted, and sent by a trusty servant into the Rohilla country. Thus one Mohammedan prince was ever ready to rob and oppress another, while perpetually uniting in prayers and denunciations against the infidel. The vizier refused to fulfil his promise of giving up Meer Cossim to the English. When Major Munro reached Benares, an agent of the virtual governor of the Delhi empire waited upon the English officer, and opened fresh negotiations. He refused, in his employer's name, to deliver up Meer Cossim, Shimroo, or any of the fugitives, but offered to make peace and indemnify the English for the losses they had sustained, and for the expenses of the war. Munro refused. Subsequently the vizier offered to

\* *Evidence of Major Munro, First Report.*



connive at Meer Cossim's escape from his own custody, in such a way as that the English might make sure of catching him. He also offered to have Shimroo assassinated at an entertainment; but would not surrender him, it being contrary to the Koran. His excellency had no objection to a foul and sanguinary act of treachery, provided it was not brought under any especial prohibition of Mohammedan casuistry — exemplifying the way in which Mohammedanism hardened the heart, and prepared the hands for murder, while it made hypocrites and fanatics of its professors.

It was found impossible to make terms, and active hostilities were again renewed. The English laid unsuccessful siege to Chumnughur; but no battle of consequence occurred, and Major Munro resigned his command, and quitted India. Meanwhile, the occupation of the musnid of Bengal by Meer Jaffier was not productive of satisfaction to those who placed him there. He sent to Calcutta complaints, similar to those with which Meer Cossim had tormented the council; and the same sort of contests between the officers of the soubahdar and of the company continued. Meer Jaffier protested that it was impossible to govern Bengal while the English asserted rights and privileges subversive of all native government. The disputes with his highness were terminated by his death, which took place in February, 1765.

There were two competitors for the vacant government; the second son of the deceased prince, named Nujum-ad-Dowlah, and the infant son of the deceased Meeran. The English recognised Nujum-ad-Dowlah, although they had very little confidence in either his integrity or ability. They therefore took measures to insure their power, and, if possible, secure peace, in connection with the accession of the new sovereign. One of their methods for accomplishing these objects was to take upon them the defence of the three provinces, on condition of the new soubahdar paying five lacs of rupees per mensem for the support of the army thus employed. Meer Jaffier had done this for several months previous to his death; but the English desired to have a public sanction connected with its future performance. The next care was to obtain proper persons for the management of the chief offices of state. This created difficulty. Meer Jaffier had been singularly attached to a man named Nundcoomar, a most treacherous enemy to the English. To him, well knowing that fact, Meer Jaffier had confided the chief management of his affairs. Mr. Van-

sittart opposed the elevation of this man by Meer Jaffier, but the latter made it a *sine qua non* to his own acceptance of power, at a moment when the English were glad to obtain some influential prince to set up in opposition to Meer Cossim. The governor and council deemed it expedient to yield; but the governor's misgivings were powerful as to the probable result.

The remarks of Mr. Vansittart, when he reluctantly gave his consent to the exaltation of Nundcoomar, were as follow:—"As to Nundcoomar, he had hitherto made himself remarkable for nothing but a seditious and treacherous disposition, which had led him to perpetrate the most atrocious acts against our government, having been detected and convicted by the voice of the whole board, in encouraging and assisting our enemies in their designs against Bengal; taking the opportunity of the indulgence granted him, of living in Calcutta, under the company's protection, to make himself the channel for carrying on a correspondence between the Governor of Pondicherry, and the shah-zada, then at war with us. During the soubahdarship of Jaffier Allee Cawn he had distinguished himself by fomenting quarrels between him and the presidency. After the promotion of Cossim Allee Cawn he became as active, but with greater success, in inventing plots, and raising jealousies against him. This gave him an ascendancy over some of the members of the board, and made him a party object; by which, and an unparalleled perseverance, he was enabled to set the whole community in a flame. Such was the man whom the nabob chose for the administration of his affairs, and whose exaltation to this rank he made a condition of his acceptance of the soubahdarship."

It was doubtless because Nundcoomar was likely to work skilfully in undermining the English that he was such a favourite with Meer Jaffier, who, at heart, hated them, and desired to have appropriate instruments at hand should opportunity for their expulsion ever arise.

During the second government of Meer Jaffier various circumstances occurred to increase the suspicions which the English entertained of his chief advice, and they resolved that this man should not stand near the throne of Nujum-ad-Dowlah. They accordingly selected Mahomed Reza Khan for the post of chief minister to the new soubahdar. Nundcoomar's talents for intrigue were immediately set to work. He, unknown to the English, opened communications with the court of Delhi, and obtained thence a sumnid for the new soubahdar, before the English had com-



pleted their arrangements; thus making it appear that his highness ascended the throne not by English power or influence, but through the grace of the emperor; this was a means in the eyes of the multitude of depriving the English of the prestige they were so ambitious to maintain. After various skilful and successful manœuvres, this gifted but vicious man was unable to do more than thwart somewhat the designs of the English, who ultimately carried all their arrangements into effect. The council succeeded in gaining considerable power in the appointment of revenue officers, and thus hoped to guard against the quarrels which during successive reigns had disturbed the peace of Bengal. Concerning these arrangements and others into which the English afterwards entered, a distinguished historian\* of British empire in India thus writes:—"All these arrangements may fairly be supposed to have had their origin in an honest zeal for the benefit of the company by whose servants they were made, and of the country to which they belonged. The same favourable view cannot be taken of their conduct in another instance. They renewed with Nujum-ad-Dowlah the agreement contained in the last treaty made with his father for continuing to the English the privilege of carrying on the inland trade free from duties, excepting the two and a half per cent. paid on salt. Not only was this unreasonable and unjust in itself, but it was in direct contravention of positive orders from the company at home. The court of directors, by letters dated 8th February, 1764, had required the inland trade to be discontinued. The court of proprietors shortly afterwards recommended a reconsideration of the subject, with a view to its regulation in such a manner as should 'prevent all further disputes between the soubahdar and the company.' The court of directors accordingly, in a letter dated 1st June, 1704, desired the council of Fort William to form, with the approbation of the nabob—in the language of the despatch, 'with his free will and consent, and in such a manner as not to afford any just grounds of complaint'—a proper and equitable plan for carrying on the private trade: but it is to be remarked, in giving these directions, the court took occasion to express their disapprobation of those articles in the treaty with Meer Jaffier which provided for the immunity of the company's servants from custom duties except on salt, while the general exemption granted by Meer Cossim was to be reversed. The court write, 'these are terms which appear to be so very injurious to the nabob

and to the natives, that they cannot, in the very nature of them, tend to anything but the producing general heart-burnings and disaffection; and consequently there can be little reason to expect the tranquillity in the country can be permanent: the orders therefore in our said letter of the 8th of February—the orders directing the entire abandonment of the inland trade—are to remain in force, until a more equitable and satisfactory plan can be formed and adopted.' In the face of these orders, the council of Calcutta inserted in their treaty with Nujum-ad-Dowlah an article reserving to the servants of the company the privilege of continuing to trade upon the same terms as had been granted by Meer Jaffier—terms which the directors declared injurious to both prince and people, and incompatible with the tranquillity of the country. Well might the authority whose orders were thus set at nought address those by whom the new treaty was framed and concluded, in language of severe and indignant reproof. In expressing their opinion upon the treaty, the court, after advertizing to this article and to their previous orders, say, 'we must and do consider what you have done as an express breach and violation of our orders, and as a determined resolution to sacrifice the interests of the company and the peace of the country to lucrative and selfish views. This unaccountable behaviour puts an end to all confidence in those who made this treaty.'\*

"While the private trade was thus secured for the benefit of the company's servants in general, those who had been instrumental in placing the new nabob on the throne had the usual opportunities of promoting their own special interests. Presents of large amount were tendered, and though for a time the members of council displayed a decent coyness, they were not unrelenting: as usual on such occasions, their scruples gave way before the arguments of their tempters. The nabob dispensed his wealth with a liberality becoming his rank. The gratitude of Mahomed Reza Khan was manifested by the earnestness with which he pressed a participation in his good fortune upon those who had bestowed it on him; and Juggut Seit,† anxious for the support of the British council in aiding his influence with the nabob, was ready, in the spirit of commercial speculation, to purchase it. Mr. Vansittart had retired from the government before the death of Meer Jaffier, and the chair was occupied by Mr. Spencer,

\* *Letter to Bengal*, 19th of February, 1766.

\* Edward Thornton, Esq. *British Empire in India*, vol. i. chap. vi. p. 470, &c.

† A banker, relative of the two unfortunate persons murdered by Meer Cossim, and successor to their vast trade and wealth.



a gentleman who, most opportunely for himself, had been brought from Bombay just in time to improve his fortune to the extent of two lacs of rupees."

The members of council obtained large sums by these nefarious transactions. While these things occurred in Bengal, the war with the vizier, as Nabob of Oude, was still waged to the advantage of English arms. The unprincipled members of the council having obtained such treasures by the accession of the new soubahdar, and feeling themselves secure against anything the deposed soubahdar could do, offered to make peace with the Nabob of Oude, if he would, *as an act of justice*, execute Meer Cossim and Shimroo. This proposal shocked all who heard of it, except those most concerned in the infamy. The court of directors in London were aware of the proper conduct of Major Munro in refusing to be a party to any treacherous act on the part of the nabob towards these culprits, and had approved of his principles and policy. When they heard of this proposal coming from the council, they believed, or affected to believe, that the council could not have been in earnest, and observed, in reply, "If the law of hospitality forbade his delivering them up, surely it forbade his murdering them."\*

Nothing seems to have come of this vile project, so worthy of the men who then ruled Bengal. The war went on. Chumnughur, which had so long resisted the English, surrendered in February. Allahabad fell before their arms the same month. The emperor, who professed to desire the success of the British, took up his residence in that imperial city. The Nabob of Oude fled to his capital, but after a short time abandoned Lucknow, and sought refuge in Rohilcund. Meer Cossim made his escape, and went in quest of his jewels. Shimroo abandoned the vizier when his cause was no longer prosperous, nor his service profitable. The ultimate fate of the nabob trembled in the balance; but the incompetent and unsteady council knew not what course to take, and were so occupied with their usual occupations of plunder and oppression within the limits of Bengal as to have little leisure for great questions beyond its confines, which only affected the company in whose employment they were, the poor people of the country which they oppressed, or the honour of their own country, which they never consulted.

Bengal was nearly ruined. Repeated revolutions had unsettled the minds of men. Trade and industry fled affrighted from such a realm of conflict. The council and the native rulers,

\* *Letter to Bengal*, 19th of February, 1760.

together, had, by their unprincipled ambition, turned it into a vast Aceldama. The directors in London knew all this, and sought and found a remedy. Lord Macaulay thus depicts the state of affairs at this juncture:—"A great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings; the internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that it could go no further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants, exposed to temptation such as that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, and ill-informed company, situated at such a distance, that the average interval of sending a dispatch, and the receipt of an answer, was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators, and flocks of camel-leopards,—the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico, or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter horses, trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to grow rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another nabob named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had parts, and a will; and though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit; nay, which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and could unmake him. The servants of the company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of



almost the whole of the internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependants who ranged through the province spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master; and his master was armed with all the power of the company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the company thicker than the loins of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. Under their old masters they had, at least, one resource—when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization. It resembled the government of evil genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man as their fathers had been used to do from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages, which the report of his approach had made desolate. The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neighbouring powers, and to all the haughty race presented a dauntless front. The English armies, everywhere outnumbered, were everywhere victorious. A succession of commanders formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of our country. It was impossible, however, that even the military establishments of the country should long continue exempt from the vices which prevailed in every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination spread from the civil service to the officers of the army. The evil continued to grow till every mess-room became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions. At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. The general cry was that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded."

As the result of the public feeling so strongly expressed at home, Clive was appointed "governor and commander-in-chief of the British possessions in Bengal," and he set sail the third time for India, arriving at Calcutta in May, 1765. Scarcely had he reached the seat of his new government when he vigorously set about the reform of abuses. He met the council, and expressed his determination to carry out a thorough and searching reform. A vague expectation existed among them that he would fall in with their views, yet rumours had reached them that Clive came out for the specific purpose of putting down their delinquencies. Johnstone, who was as bold as he was hypocritical and venal, "bearded the lion;" but while proceeding with his oration, Clive suddenly stopped him, and inquired, with his characteristic hauteur and decision, if the council intended to question the power of the new government. The orator murmured apologies, and the awed and baffled conclave of robbers, which was then dignified by the name of the council of Bengal, remained silent and submissive, each member alarmed as to the consequences which might ensue to himself if Clive were resisted, or his opinion disputed.

The reader will probably inquire where, during the period of the serious transactions from the restoration of Meer Jaffier to the arrival of Clive as governor, was Warren Hastings?—he who so eloquently and pertinaciously asserted the true interests of the company, as compatible with the honour of England and the rights of the Bengalee. His manly protests, and the restraint of his influence, were renewed in 1764, when, as stated before, he returned to England, where he resided during the whole of the transactions which had occurred. His representations in England had great weight with the company in showing them the true state of matters in Bengal, and the importance of a new and vigorous government of that presidency. Other and important events were destined to transpire before Warren Hastings trod again the soil of India, and took up his abode once more in the city of palaces.

Clive, having been made an Irish peer while in England, entered upon his duties as governor and commander-in-chief in Bengal with increased dignity, his new rank greatly promoting his influence both among his countrymen and the natives. He had also the advantage of being assisted by a body of men called the select committee. The person among them upon whom he had most reliance was General Carnac, the same who, as Major Carnac, had distinguished himself so well in Indian warfare. The council regarded the



select committee with great jealousy, but Clive overbore insubordination and held on his course.

The first subject of reform was the private trade, which he put down. Soon after, a complaint from the new nabob against his chief minister, that the latter had utterly exhausted the treasury to bribe or satisfy the demands of the council, led to an investigation which was marked by many stormy scenes, and issued in an exposure of the corruption of the council greater than had ever been alleged against them, or could have been supposed. The total disobedience of the company's orders was proved by these investigations to have been as flagrant as the corruption which prompted it.

Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, having formed an alliance with Mulhar, a Mahratta chief, made preparations for renewed hostilities against Bengal. Brigadier-general Carnac made such arrangements as prevented the junction of the allied forces, and by this means defeated the scheme of the alliance. The general fell upon a division of the Mahratta army unexpectedly, and cut it to pieces. Intimidated by the boldness and energy of the exploit, the whole Mahratta force retired towards the Jumna, whither Carnac proceeded, attacked, and routed them. The Nabob of Oude losing all hope of contending successfully with the English, threw himself upon their generosity. He came over for that purpose to the camp of Carnac.

Lord Clive quitted Calcutta on the 24th of June, 1765, and proceeded to the north-west, in order to negotiate in person with the nabob and with the emperor. On the 16th of August, at Allahabad, a treaty was signed.\* This was the beginning of a connection with Oude, which, to the present day, has been fruitful of trouble to the English. This connection was forced upon the English by the aggressive policy of Sujah-ad-Dowlah. The English then acted in the case of Oude with moderation, and since then greater forbearance has been shown to it than to any of the tributary native states of India, so long as it remained in that category. The nabob resisted the insertion of any clause in the treaty for the introduction of "factories" in his dominions, but a stipulation for a right to trade was, nevertheless, insisted upon. The emperor confirmed by treaty all previous privileges possessed by the English, granted the company a reversionary interest in Lord Clive's jaghire, and conferred upon it also the dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. The company henceforth held the provinces on a footing superior to their previous occupancy. The com-

\* *Vide Printed Treaties.*

pany became in fact the soubahdar, while they still upheld one nominally invested with the office. Previously the power of the English was greater than that of the soubahdars, but the latter still held great authority, and a direct command over the resources of the country, financial and military; henceforth all real power rested with the English. The opinions of the select committee on this subject were thus expressed in a letter to the court of directors:—"The perpetual struggles for superiority between the nabobs and your agents, together with the recent proofs before us of notorious and avowed corruption, have rendered us unanimously of opinion, after the most mature deliberation, that no other method could be suggested of laying the axe to the root of all these evils, than that of obtaining the dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa for the company. By establishing the power of the Great Mogul, we have likewise established his rights; and his majesty, from principles of gratitude, equity, and policy, has thought proper to bestow this important employment on the company, the nature of which is, the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the nizamat, to remit the remainder to Delhi, or wherever the king shall reside or direct."

The directors adopted the views of the select committee, and conveyed their approval, with instructions for future policy, in the following terms:—

"We come now to consider the great and important affair of the dewanee. When we consider that the barrier of the country government was entirely broke down, and every Englishman throughout the country armed with an authority that owned no superior, and exercising his power to the oppression of the helpless native, who knew not whom to obey, at such a crisis, we cannot hesitate to approve your obtaining the dewanee for the company.

"We must now turn our attention to render our acquisitions as permanent as human wisdom can make them. This permanency, we apprehend, can be found only in the simplicity of the execution. We observe the account you give of the office and power of the king's dewan in former times was—the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the nizamat, to remit the remainder to Delhi. This description of it is not the office we wish to execute; the experience we have already had, in the province of Burdwan,

\* *Letter to Bengal, 17th of May, 1766.*



convinces us how unfit an Englishman is to conduct the collection of the revenues, and follow the subtle native through all his arts to conceal the real value of his country, to perplex and to elude the payments. We therefore entirely approve of your preserving the ancient form of government, in the upholding the dignity of the soubahdar.

"We conceive the office of dewan should be exercised only in superintending the collection and disposal of the revenues, which office, though vested in the company, should officially be executed by our resident at the durbar, under the control of the governor and select committee, the ordinary bounds of which control should extend to nothing beyond the superintending the collection of the revenues and the receiving the money from the nabob's treasury to that of the dewannah, or the company.

"The resident at the durbar, being constantly on the spot, cannot be long a stranger to any abuses in the government, and is always armed with power to remedy them. It will be his duty to stand between the administration and the encroachments always to be apprehended from the agents of the company's servants, which must first be known to him; and we rely on his fidelity to the company to check all such encroachments, and to prevent the oppression of the natives. We would have his correspondence to be carried on with the select committee through the channel of the president. He should keep a diary of all his transactions. His correspondence with the natives must be publicly conducted; copies of all his letters sent and received be transmitted monthly to the presidency, with duplicates and triplicates, to be transmitted home, in our general packet, by every ship."

Mr. Auber observes upon the last paragraph:—"This was the introduction of the system of recorded check, which has since prevailed in conducting the home administration of the India government."

Reformations were as much required in the military as in the civil affairs of the presidency. In attempting to carry out these, Lord Clive met with a more formidable opposition than ever from the council. At the instigation of a general officer, Sir Robert Fletcher, all the officers of the company's army conspired to resign their commissions on a single day; so that by depriving the army of officers, the governor would be compelled to submit to their terms. By amazing vigour, ability, and resolution, Clive put down this mutiny without bloodshed. General Fletcher, and some of the chief delinquents, were cashiered; and the rest were

pardoned, on profession of repentance, and permitted to return to their duty.

While Clive was reducing the army to discipline, an opportunity was afforded to him of showing his zeal for their welfare. A large legacy was left to him by Meer Jaffier, consisting of five lacs of rupees. Clive made over this sum to the company, for the formation of a military fund for invalided officers and soldiers, and their widows. The company accepted the trusteeship, and passed resolutions complimenting his lordship's generosity. This act has been censured, as contrary to the covenants insisted upon by the company with their servants, after the government of Mr. Vansittart, that no presents were to be received from the native governments by any of the company's officers. The directors having been assured by their legal advisers that the legacy could be received by Clive without violating the covenants, they passed resolutions of approval of his lordship's conduct. Clive displayed all his former activity during his government. He visited the upper parts of Bengal personally, investigating all the company's affairs.

The health of his lordship began to suffer from his exposure to the climate, and this made him desirous to return. Another motive for that wish he confessed to be, that having a numerous family, he desired to superintend the education and conduct of his children. His great wealth, which he desired to enjoy in England, was probably as influential as any other cause of his desire to return home. The company sent an express overland, by way of Bussorah, to induce him to remain another season. He reluctantly consented, and devoted his vast energies to the great work of consolidating the power of the company.

During Lord Clive's stay in Bahar, while investigating the company's affairs there, a congress was held at Chupra. His lordship, General Carnac, Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the emperor's chief minister, and some Jaut and Rohilla chiefs, assembled there. A treaty, for mutual security against the Mahrattas, was there formed, in case those marauders should invade the dominions of any of the states united in the alliance. Deputies from the Mahratta chiefs also attended at Chupra, who made ardent protestations of peace, and proved that what had been construed into hostile demonstrations was the work of the emperor himself, who had foolishly engaged them to escort him to Delhi.

In May, 1766, the soubahdar died. It was well that the native government had been recently placed on a new footing, as already



described, for otherwise the death of the soubahdar would have caused new intrigues and disturbances. Clive concerted with the governments of Bombay and Madras such operations against the Mahrattas as would in case of fresh invasions from them effectually check their power. Clive's health now seriously gave way, and his anxiety to return home greatly increased. He, however, believed that the object for which he had returned to Bengal had been accomplished, and that the consequences of his departure apprehended by the company would in all probability not occur.

The private trade, which Lord Clive had apparently suppressed, was soon after renewed, and it is scarcely to his honour that he became participator in it, realizing large profits, which he divided among his relations and friends. He justified himself on the ground that he personally received no benefit; but if it enabled him to provide for his brother-in-law and other adherents, even to his valet, the excuse is not valid.

He quitted Bengal on the 29th of January, 1767. The career of Clive as a soldier was now ended. Even as a statesman he had already numbered his days; for although in England he took a large part in parliamentary and India-house concerns, and was put upon his defence by bitter and powerful enemies, so as to compel him to be very active in public life, he never again saw India, and could only influence affairs there by his opinion, given to the directors or to the public. Probably the best estimate of his character as a soldier and statesman, and of his general services in India, ever made, was that expressed by Mr. Thornton in the following passages of his Indian history:—  
“The reader who looks back upon the scenes through which he has been conducted will at once perceive that it is on his military character that Clive's reputation must rest. All the qualities of a soldier were combined in him, and each so admirably proportioned to the rest, that none predominated to the

detriment of any other. His personal courage enabled him to acquire a degree of influence over his troops which has rarely been equalled, and which in India was before his time unknown; and this, united with the cool and consummate judgment by which his daring energy was controlled and regulated, enabled him to effect conquests which, if they had taken place in remote times, would be regarded as incredible. Out of materials the most unpromising he had to create the instruments for effecting these conquests, and he achieved his object where all men but himself might have despaired. No one can dwell upon the more exciting portions of his history without catching some portion of the ardour which led him through these stirring scenes; no one who loves the country for which he fought can recall them to memory without mentally breathing honour to the name of Clive. In India his fame is even greater than at home, and that fame is not his merely, it is his country's.

“As a statesman, Clive's vision was clear, but not extensive. He could promptly and adroitly adapt his policy to the state of things which he found existing; but none of his acts display any extraordinary political sagacity. Turning from his claims in a field where his talents command but a moderate degree of respect, and where the means by which he sometimes sought to serve the state and sometimes to promote his own interests give rise to a very different feeling, it is due to one to whom his country is so deeply indebted, to close the narrative of his career by recurring once more to that part of his character which may be contemplated with unmixed satisfaction. As a soldier he was pre-eminently great. With the name of Clive commences the flood of glory which has rolled on till it has covered the wide face of India with memorials of British valour. By Clive was formed the base of the column which a succession of heroes, well worthy to follow in his steps, have carried upward to a towering height, and surrounded with trophies of honour, rich, brilliant, and countless.”



## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF MR. VERELST AND MR. CARTIER—  
ARRIVAL OF WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR.

CLIVE's last act before his departure from Bengal was to continue the select committee, the company having empowered him either to abolish or continue it as he deemed the wiser course. He nominated Mr. Verelst to succeed him as governor, assisted by Mr. Cartier, Colonel Smith, Mr. Sykes, and Mr. Beecher. On the 17th of February, 1767, Mr. Verelst took the oath as governor. Scarcely had Clive departed when matters again fell into the former train of corruption and insubordination. Mr. Mill gives the following picture of the condition of the province:—"For the benefit of certain false pretexts which imposed upon nobody, the government of the country, as far as regarded the protection of the people, was dissolved. Neither the nabob nor his officers dared to exert any authority against the English, of whatsoever injustice and oppression they might be guilty. The gomastahs, or Indian agents employed by the company's servants, not only practised unbounded tyranny, but, overawing the nabob and his highest order, converted the tribunals of justice themselves into instruments of cruelty, making them inflict punishment upon the very wretches whom they oppressed, and whose only crime was their not submitting with sufficient willingness to the insolent rapacity of those subordinate tyrants. While the ancient administration of the country was rendered inefficient, this suspension of the powers of government was supplied by nothing in the regulations of the English. Beyond the ancient limits of the presidency, the company had no legal power over the natives: beyond these limits, the English themselves were not amenable to the British laws; and the company had no power of coercion except by sending persons out of the country; a remedy always inconvenient, and, except for very heinous offences, operating too severely upon the individual to be willingly applied. The natural consequence was, that the crimes of the English and their agents were in a great measure secured from punishment, and the unhappy natives lay prostrate at their feet. As the revenue of the government depended upon the productive operations of the people; and as a people are productive only in proportion to the share of their own produce which they are permitted to enjoy; this wretched administration could not fail, in

time, to make itself felt in the company's exchequer."\*

Mr. Verelst's administration, and that of Mr. Cartier, by whom he was followed, were chiefly occupied by internal arrangements, revenue, and trade.† The Mahrattas did not perpetrate their usual raids, and the weak soubahdar did not give himself up to political intrigue after the fashion of his predecessors.‡ This period of peace did not bring commercial prosperity to the company. Their servants invented new systems of cheating them, and of harassing the people. The company's servants still returned rich from Bengal after a few years' service, and the poverty of the province itself increased. The condition of the company's interests in Bengal was deplorable and disheartening.§ While, however, Bengal was at peace within its own borders, there were causes at work beyond its limits, to engage the presidency in the work of war. The "Goorkhas" had invaded the territory of the Rajah of Nepaul, who was friendly, and between whose people and the subjects of the soubahdar and the English there was trade. He claimed the assistance of the soubahdar, and the English united with his highness in affording it. The council and the select committee had the usual assumption of those bodies, and the weakness and incompetency for warlike undertakings which had hitherto characterised the former body. Their plans were expensive, yet inadequate; rash, yet not bold; time-serving, but neither cautious nor prudent. The expedition against the Goorkhas was abortive.

Hyder Ali, of whom the reader will be informed in another chapter, became formidable at this time, and carried war and desolation

\* Governor Verelst, in his letter to the directors, immediately before his resignation, dated 16th of December, 1769, says: "We insensibly broke down the barrier betwixt us and government, and the native grew uncertain where his obedience was due. Such a divided and complicated authority gave rise to oppressions and intrigues, unknown at any other period; the officers of the government caught the infection, and, being removed from any immediate control, proceeded with still greater audacity. In the meantime, we were repeatedly and peremptorily forbid to avow any public authority over the officers of government in our own names," &c.

† *English Government in Bengal.* By Harry Verelst, London, 1772. *Thoughts on our Acquisitions in Bengal,* London, 1771.

‡ Stewart's *History of Bengal*, 1813.

§ *History of the East India Company*, London, 1793.



into the Carnatic. The Madras government applied for aid to Bengal. The urgency of the case was greater than the invasion of Nepaul by the Goorkhas, and assistance was sent to such an extent as to tie the hands of the Bengal council from aggressive proceedings elsewhere. The council was more troubled from the scarcity of money than from any other means. This they attributed to the Chinese investments, which were generally made from the Bengal revenues. Mr. Mill accounts for it by the large sums drained from the country in various ways by the company's servants. These they to a great extent sent home through the Dutch and French Companies.\*

On the 23rd of October, 1768, the deficiency reached 663,055 rupees. The correspondence between Fort William and Fort St. George at this period presents a pitiable picture of bad financiers, incapable administrators, and traders ignorant of commercial philosophy. Mr. Mill attributes the poverty of the English exchequer in Bengal mainly to the absorption of their revenues in the expenses of governing their newly acquired territory. Professor Wilson denies this in the following terms:—"This is not warranted by the facts: a slight examination of the general accounts of receipts and disbursements exhibited in the accounts of the Bengal presidency published by the select committee shows that the financial difficulties experienced there arose not from the political, but the commercial transactions of the company. From 1761 to 1772 there was a surplus on the territorial account of about £5,475,000 (the smaller figures are purposely omitted). The whole produce of the import cargoes was £1,437,000, the cost value of the goods remitted to England, £5,291,000, of which, therefore, £3,854,000 had been provided out of the revenue. Besides this, large remittances for commercial purposes had been made to other settlements, and to China, exceeding those received by £2,358,000, and consequently, exceeding the whole territorial receipt by £737,000. It is not matter of surprise, therefore, that the territorial treasury was embarrassed, nor is it to be wondered at that the resources of the country were in progress of diminution; the constant abstraction of capital, whether in bullion or goods, could not fail in time to impoverish any country however rich, and was very soon felt in India, in which no accumulation of capital had ever taken place, from the unsettled state of the government, and the insecurity of property, and the constant tendency of the population to press upon the means of subsistence."

\* Mill, book iv. chap. vii.

On the 24th of December, 1769, Mr. Verelst left the three provinces in perfect peace, and with a less amount of jealousy between the soubahdar and the council than had at any previous time existed.\*

The greatest danger of Verelst's government was an event which passed harmlessly away, but which, at the beginning of his presidential career, seriously menaced the peace of Bengal. Shah Abdallah—instigated, it was believed, by Meer Cossim—advanced with a powerful army towards Delhi. The council made demonstrations in favour of "the king," as his imperial majesty was then frequently styled. The cause of his majesty was, in fact, the cause of the soubahdar. His majesty was unable to cope with the Shah Abdallah; and was on the point of submission, when English interposition compelled a compromise. The shah, however, did not return to his capital of Lahore without exacting an indemnity from his majesty of Delhi. The return of the marauder was harassed by the Sikhs, who were then rising into power, and were destined to hold Lahore itself as their capital at a period not remote.

The danger of a war beyond the frontier, as the ally of the emperor, caused the council to urge the company at home to complete the military establishment recommended by Lord Clive. Mr. Verelst exerted himself in treating with the Jauts, Mahrattas, and other native powers; the policy upon which he proceeded having been dictated from home, the object being to form a complete chain of the company's influence and dominion, from the banks of the Caramnassa to the extremity of the coast of the Coromandel.† The vizier (Nabob of Oude) maintained a formidable army; and notwithstanding the terrible defeats endured by him under the government of Mr. Vansittart, and his humiliated position to Lord Clive, he began a new system of intrigues almost as soon as Mr. Verelst was called into power. He first endeavoured, by intimidation, to compel the King of Delhi to surrender to him the fortress, city, and district of Allahabad. His majesty refused to do so, rightly judging that any attempt on the part of his rebellious vizier to seize the coveted territory would bring the English upon him. The vizier apprehending the same result should he seize the place, had the audacity to attempt the corruption of a British officer. Colonel Smith had remained with a British brigade at Allahabad since the Lahore rajah had made his incursion upon the King of

\* *English Government in Bengal.* By H. Verelst, London, 1772.

† *British Power in India,* Auber, vol. i. chap. iv. p. 182.



Delhi's dominions. The vizier repaired to the colonel, offering a large reward, and to swear eternal fidelity upon the Koran, if that officer would co-operate in delivering the fortress into his hands. The colonel, of course, communicated these facts to his government; and measures were taken to compel the vizier to reduce the army which he maintained as the Nabob of Oude. This purpose was effected after troublesome negotiations; and menaces which, if not executed, would have exposed the British to contempt, but the execution of which, had the nabob resisted, would have involved much expense and bloodshed, and probably new warlike combinations against the British.

There was a disposition to negotiate with the native princes under menaces, which exposed the council to alternatives similar to those which depended upon their failure with the Nabob of Oude, had they been so unfortunate as not to engage him to their demands. There was also a disposition on the part of the council at Calcutta to mix in petty disputes, in the hope by dispossessing one weak rajah after another of his territory, to grasp more for the company. Among minor instances of this, there was one which concerned the Rajah of Hindooput, which very unfavourably impressed the company at home.

In view of the diplomatic meddling which so much engaged the council and Mr. Verelst, the directors wrote a despatch which was one of the most enlightened ever directed to India. It is probable that the opinions of Clive and Hastings found expression in these documents. One was written on May the 11th, 1769, the other in June. The following are extracts:—"We have constantly enjoined you to avoid every measure that might lead you into further connections, and have recommended you to use your utmost endeavour to keep peace in Bengal and with the neighbouring powers; and you, on your part, have not been wanting in assurances of your resolution to conform to these our wishes. Yet, in the very instructions which you have given to the deputies sent up to Sujah Dowlah with professions of friendship, you have inserted an article which will not only give fresh cause of jealousy to Sujah Dowlah, but engages you likewise in disputes with powers still more distant. We mean the article whereby they are directed to apply to the king for a grant of two or three circars, which belonged, you say, originally to the Eliabad province, but were unlawfully possessed, some time since, by the Hindooput rajah. Is it our business to inquire into the rights of the Hindooput rajah, and the usurpations he may have made upon others? And,

supposing the fact to have been proved, does such an injustice on his part give us any claim to the disputed districts? If the districts in question belong to the Eliabad province, they are a part of Sujah Dowlah's undoubted inheritance; and, supposing him to waive his right, you cannot send a man nor a gun for the defence of these new acquisitions without passing through his country, which will be a perpetual source of dispute and complaint. Nor does the mischief stop here. The Hindooput rajah, who, by all accounts, is rich, will naturally endeavour to form alliances, to defend himself against this unexpected attack of the English. Then you will say your honour is engaged, and the army is to be led against other powers still more distant. You say nothing in your letters of this very essential article of your instructions to the deputies. In several of our letters, since we have been engaged as principals in the politics of India, and particularly during the last two or three years, we have given it as our opinion, that the most prudent system we could pursue and the most likely to be attended with a permanent security to our possessions, would be to incline to those few chiefs of Hindostan who yet preserve an independence of the Mahratta power, and are in a condition to struggle with them; for so long as they are able to keep up that struggle, the acquisitions of the company will run the less risk of disturbance. The Rohillas, the Jauts, the Nabob of the Deccan, the Nabob of Oude, and the Mysore chief, have each in their turn kept the Mahrattas in action, and we wish them still to be able to do it; it is, therefore, with great concern we see the war continuing with Hyder Naigue, and a probability of a rupture with Sujah Dowlah and Nizam Ally. In such wars we have everything to lose, and nothing to gain: for, supposing our operations be attended with the utmost success, and our enemies reduced to our mercy, we can only wish to see them restored to the condition from which they set out; that is, to such a degree of force and independence as may enable them still to keep up the contest with the Mahrattas and with each other. It would give us, therefore, the greatest satisfaction to hear that matters are accommodated, both at Bengal and on the coast: and in case such a happy event shall have taken place, you will do your utmost to preserve the tranquillity."

In July, 1769, the bad faith of the French involved the council in anxieties. The French at Chandernagore opened a deep ditch around the town, under the pretence of repairing a drain. This work was followed by others, which were intended to put the place in a position of defence, in contravention of the



eleventh article of the treaty of peace. The English government at Calcutta remonstrated and protested. The French carried on the works with greater energy. The council ordered their destruction. The French government made representations to the court of London, that the works were sanitary, and not warlike, and complained bitterly of the unreasonable jealousy of the company's servants. Either these representations were hypocritical and false, or the French government was imposed upon by the French East India Company. The latter supposition is not probable. The French government pretended to have causes for complaint, as it had determined, upon the first favourable opportunity, to endeavour to regain its lost ground in the East. In the letter of the court of directors to the council of Bengal, dated the 27th of June, 1770, the result of the complaint of the French court to that of St. James is thus stated:—"His majesty has constituted Sir John Lindsay his plenipotentiary for examining into the supposed infractions of the late treaty of peace: you will afford him the necessary information and assistance, whereby he may be enabled to answer the complaints of the French plenipotentiary, to justify your conduct, and to defend those rights of the British crown which were obtained by express stipulation in the treaty of Paris, and which appear to have been invaded by the proceedings of the French at Chandernagore."

Sir John Lindsay was not disposed to regard matters in a light unfavourable to France, and much unseemly discussion between the servants of the company and the servants of the crown arose out of the appointment of Sir John. The council was undoubtedly justified in complaining of an infraction of treaty, and in enforcing the observance of it, results proved that the opinion they formed of the temper and intentions of the French from their proceedings in the matter of dispute, was well founded. The year 1770 opened with important changes in connection with Bengal, and with the surrounding states intimately related to it. Mr. Cartier began his career as president. Brigadier-general Smith resigned his command in December, 1769, and Sir Robert Barker took his place. Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, who had lost the king's confidence, was, by a series of ingenious intrigues on his part, reinstated in favour, and was again in full power as vizier of the empire. One of the imperial princes married the nabob's daughter, still further promoting the vizier's power. These official and political changes took place, not noiselessly, but without war. There were commotions at Allahabad, and mutinies of the

troops of the empire and of Oude; yet these important transactions were accomplished without battle, and the collisions of thrones and states. Amidst the rapid vicissitudes thus brought about, Meer Cossim, so long hidden from the observation of the different governments, emerged from his obscurity. The Ranee of Gohud invited him from the Rohilla country to Gwalior. The vizier knew his movements, and supported them. He committed the foolish king to a correspondence with him. Mahrattas, Jauts, Sikhs, and Rajpoots were engaged in a confederacy to support the part of the new actor upon the great political stage. Motions of the various parties were like the moves upon a chess-board, where the players are equal and the game is drawn. There were demonstrations which portended the accomplishment of the views of each of the various parties in turn, but none obtained the advantages meditated. The French were unostentatiously influencing all parties against the English, but their position was one of such commanding strength that none dared to strike the first blow. The English remained firm and unyielding. As the rock, flinging back the rays of the torrid sun, frowning upon the angry waves breaking against it, and silent and settled while the tempest sweeps around, so English power in Bengal presented a sturdy, noiseless front to the combination of distinct but blended, or concussing, elements of political ambition and power which were gathered around. Band after band of Rohilla, Rajpoot, Mahratta, Sikh, and Jaut moved about in concert, or in conflict, as waves tossed upon waves in a storm-smitten sea, to be confused and broken.

In March, 1769, the soubahdar of Bengal died of small-pox, and a younger brother, ten years of age, reigned in his stead. Later in the year Rajah Bulwant Sing died at Benares, and was succeeded by Cheyt Sing.

In 1770 the rapid and victorious movements of the Mahrattas caused much uneasiness in Bengal. The menacing attitude which they assumed brought out circumstances which afforded fresh proofs of the weakness and folly of the king, and the perfidy of his vizier. Partly through the good faith of some of the Mahratta generals, and probably as much from the fear which the English inspired among the rest, no inroad was made upon Bengal. The spirit displayed by the French in fortifying Chandernagore in the early part of the previous year pervaded their conduct during that of which we write. They seemed anxious to bring about a rupture between France and England in the hope that, if the English were distracted by a European war, the French in India might form such alliances



with the native governments as would turn the scale of power against the English.

The Mahrattas, however, unwilling to attack the English, harassed their real and pretended allies, and at last seized upon portions of the King of Delhi's territories and of those of the Nabob of Oude. The council at Calcutta resolved to interfere. The force at Dinagapore was ordered to march to the banks of the Caramnassa, and the garrison at Allahabad was reinforced, while two of the king's battalions quartered there marched to the points most in danger from the enemy. The Mahrattas laid siege to Ferokabad, but being deficient in material, they turned the siege into a blockade. The arrangements of the English caused the blockade to be raised without a blow being struck. The Mahrattas, however, departed in many separate bodies, taking various routes, as if determined to fall upon many different places at once, and, by a series of masterly movements and rapid marches, all these divisions converged upon Delhi, which was captured by a *coup de main*. The English afterwards received tidings which proved to be true, that this feat was not quite so brilliant as it appeared to be: the king himself having conspired against his own government, incredible as such a policy may appear. His majesty, fearing that the victorious marauders would proclaim shah-zada in his room, adopted this strange course to prevent such a catastrophe. He even hoped that, when in the power of the Mahrattas, they would find it their interest to act in alliance with him, and that his intricate measures would issue in the fulfilment of his long-cherished and romantic desire of reigning in Delhi instead of Allahabad, and of sitting upon the throne of his ancestors unmolested. The vizier, opposed to this measure, deemed it politic to concur, and joined his forces as Nabob of Oude to those of his majesty. The king and his vizier having come to terms with their enemies in a manner so unprecedented even in the fickle policy of Indian states, the company's territory not being attacked, and his majesty and the vizier declaring not only peace but friendship, the English had no pretence for war, but endeavoured by negotiation to obtain various strong posts, which they represented to his majesty were rendered necessary to their security by his majesty's own strange proceedings.

In the month of April, 1772, Mr. Cartier retired from the government of Bengal, and Warren Hastings, then a member of council at Madras, was appointed to the government. There was no other man in India so fit for the important post, nor in England, except Clive.

Before noticing the events of Mr. Hastings' government, some notice of his career since he had left Bengal is here appropriate. It has been already shown that his conduct in India had been most honourable and humane, although his temptations were at least as numerous and pressing as those before which so many fell degraded. Lord Macaulay, in his celebrated essay on Warren Hastings, strangely asserts that little was heard of him up to the period of his leaving India with Mr. Vansittart. Had little been heard of him during that time, he probably never would have become governor of Bengal; certainly he would never have been the ruler of British India. During the whole period of his residence in Bengal he had been a noticeable person. In every meeting of council, while Mr. Vansittart administered the government, Mr. Hastings distinguished himself by the purity of his motives, the soundness of his policy, and a remarkable foresight. He had read the native character profoundly, had acquainted himself with the literature of the East extensively, and had studied political and administrative science *con amore*. He was well known to the native governments and the company's servants in India as a man of genius, and the directors and proprietary at home considered him to be a man of superior capacity before he had left Bengal.

When he returned to England, his time was chiefly occupied in retirement, meditation, liberal studies, and in recruiting his health. He did all in his power to encourage the study of oriental literature in England; and engaged the celebrated Dr. Johnson to some extent in his views; at all events, he left impressions of his own genius and learning upon the mind of that great man, to which the latter afterwards referred with pleasure.

As Hastings had not enriched himself like other "returned Indians," his pecuniary resources were small; and he became so embarrassed that he was compelled to solicit employment from the East India Company. They were very glad to make such valuable services available; and having paid the highest tribute to his talents and integrity which language could convey, they appointed him member of council in Madras. All his little savings had been invested for the benefit of his poor relatives, to whom, like Clive, he manifested the most noble generosity and ardent affection. He was from this circumstance compelled to borrow money to enable him to depart in a manner sufficiently respectable to the high post to which he was designated.

In the spring of 1769 he embarked for



Madras. The voyage was replete with romantic incident, which left a lasting impression upon the mind and heart of Hastings. It is doubtful whether the connexion of an amatory kind—so much to his discredit—formed on board the *Duke of Grafton*, did not exercise an unfavourable influence over his whole moral nature, and over his future career. His character certainly never afterwards appeared in so favourable a light as it had before, although his talent shone out more conspicuously. His moral delinquency could not obscure the brilliancy of his genius—even the sun has spots upon its disc. When Hastings arrived at Madras, he found the company's affairs in a seriously disorganized condition. Lord Macaulay describes with perfect precision the state of things, and the relation which Hastings bore to them, when he wrote, "His own tastes would have led him to political rather than

to commercial pursuits; but he knew that the favour of his employers chiefly depended upon their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He therefore, with great judgment, determined to employ his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected since the servants of the company had ceased to be clerks, and had become warriors and negotiators. In a very few months he effected an important reform. The directors notified to him their high approbation, and were so much pleased with his conduct, that they determined to place him at the head of the government of Bengal."

In this position matters must be left in the chief presidency, while the reader's attention is turned once more to the Carnatic, and to the regions of Mysore, whose prince then filled so large a space and held so great a name in Indian reputation.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

### BOMBAY AND MADRAS—EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THOSE PRESIDENCIES TO 1775.

DURING the period the history of which in Bengal has been already related, Bombay was the scene of comparatively few incidents of importance, except those which were connected with Hyder Ali, whose exploits will be the subject of a separate chapter. After the destruction of the pirates of Gheria, by Commodore James and Colonel Clive, in 1756, the presidency experienced comparatively little trouble from marauders of that description for some years. By degrees the Malwar pirates acquired strength and boldness, causing alarm to the merchants, and injury to their commerce. In January, 1765, it was resolved to put an end to those apprehensions and injuries by an attack upon the robbers in their stronghold, which was successfully executed; and the fort of Raree, in the southern Concan, was captured. By this conquest security was obtained for mercantile ships, and country boats for many years. The vicinity of the Mahrattas, and the increasing power of that confederacy, made them especially formidable to Bombay, although Madras and Bengal were also much harassed by their fitful and predatory movements against surrounding native states. The Bengal government was disposed to unite with those of the other presidencies in a combined attack upon the Mahratta power, but the Bombay council wisely represented that the Mahrattas on the

Bengal frontier acted independently of the government of Poona, that an attack upon any would constrain a combination of all the Mahratta chiefs, and that such a combination would prove far too formidable for the English to attack it with any hope of success, especially as it was likely other native forces would join the enemy. These arguments prevailed, and the formidable Mahrattas were allowed to develop their resources and power unchecked by the English, except when aggressions upon native governments in alliance with the English brought the troops of the latter into the field, or their political agents into action.

In May, 1763, Hyder Ali, or Hyder Naigue, as he was frequently then called, attracted the very serious attention of the Bombay government. Previous to this date he had put forth considerable power. He had taken Bednore, Mangalore, and Onore, and his advance into Concan had struck the country with terror. The obvious aim of Hyder was to bring the sea forts into subjection, and in doing so he professed to act in conformity with the interests of the company, by putting down piracy, preventing its revival, and offering new points for the conduct of legitimate trade. On the 27th of May he made a treaty\* with the council of Bombay, by which they were

\* *Printed Treaties*, p. 518.



allowed to erect a factory at Onore, a place afterwards rendered famous by a siege. He also afforded them various valuable commercial privileges. In return he demanded seven thousand stand of arms. This placed the council in great difficulty, for the company had issued strict orders against supplying the country powers with arms; yet, if the council had refused compliance, Hyder would have inferred that they distrusted and feared him, or that they had ultimate designs against his territory or power. The council endeavoured by half measures to avoid the difficulty; they supplied him with five hundred stand of arms, and by so doing dissatisfied both him and the company. The latter rebuked the council, and renewed, in stern language, their previous prohibitions against affording arms to native princes on any grounds or pretexts, except when allies in actual war. Hyder was disgusted at receiving about one-fourteenth of the number of muskets which he had requested, and being vindictive and suspicious, he cherished a bad feeling to the council, which he deemed it politic to suppress, although he took no trouble to conceal his disappointment and his doubts of the friendliness of the Bombay government. Hyder, however, still pressed for arms from the council, and his demands were complied with. The directors, in referring to their objections to providing native powers with musketry that might prove ultimately hostile, were very particular and authoritative in ordering that no cannon should be given or sold to them, and that none of the coast powers should be aided in obtaining ships of war. The council of Bombay was nearly as prone as that of Bengal to set the judgment of the company at defiance, where vanity, interest, or ambition, prompted a course opposed to the directors. Notwithstanding the most distinct, and even angry orders, from the directors to the contrary, the council permitted Hyder to purchase ordnance, and to build a ship of war at Bombay, to enable him to check the Mahrattas and other freebooters. Hyder was himself the greatest freebooter in India, and soon made the council to understand that they had armed him for their own injury. The Mahrattas—who were as eager to rob Hyder, as they were to rob every one else, and he was to rob them and all others—were intensely indignant at the conduct of the council. Thus this body, by its short-sighted policy, armed actual enemies under the guise of friendship, and in doing so raised up new enemies. Their proceedings towards this powerful man were full of contradiction. At one time they encouraged the Mahrattas against him, and at another supplied him with arms against

them, notwithstanding renewed orders from the directors, in the most specific terms, not to do so. After all, they wrote to Madras in 1766, while professing friendship with Hyder, requesting the council there to join them in attacking him.\* The Madras government was unwilling to incur such a risk, because of the advantageous military position held by Hyder, and from fear that Nizam Ali would form a junction with him. The Madras council were also of opinion that Hyder acted as a useful check to the Mahrattas. Upon learning the opinions prevalent at Madras, instead of an attack upon the bold adventurer, the Bombay government proposed a treaty of peace. According to this treaty he was to receive annually between three or four thousand muskets, the council persisting in its defiance of the company's orders. The council demanded payment of all monies due to it by the rajahs whom he had conquered, and especial trading privileges, of course, to the exclusion of all other European nations. Hyder eagerly grasped at one of the proposals—that he and the English should mutually furnish troops when the territory of either was menaced. It is probable that the council never intended to fulfil all their part of this stipulation, and supposed themselves to be the ingenious fabricators of a very clever trick. At all events, subsequent facts give colour to this supposition.

In 1768, after war between Hyder and the English in India had been for some time waged, they had to renew the treaty under certain modifications,—Hyder still stipulating for warlike stores, the council repeating its concessions on this point, and the directors in London disallowing and protesting against all acts performed by their servants which involved grants of arms and ammunition to native powers. The ground of objection taken by the honourable court in this particular case was, that by such a treaty stipulation Hyder was enabled to add to his military means, and thereby prepare for the first moment favourable to himself to act against the English, alone, or in alliance with other native powers. The views of the directors at home were wise and far seeing; generally they were so when opposed to their servants at the presidencies. Except in cases where men of great or extraordinary genius, such as Clive and Hastings, represented the company's interests in India, the judgment of the directors at home was far more sagacious than that of their governors or councils.

On the 23rd of February, 1771, Mr. Hodges, the president of Bombay, died, and was succeeded by Mr. Hornby. On the 7th of March,

\* *Consultations*, June 1766.



Hyder was beaten in a sanguinary conflict with the Mahrattas; and he applied to the council for help. They were unable to afford it. He felt that he was deceived, and cherished a feeling of vengeance in his heart against those whom he considered his betrayers. The council declared that, although without men or money to spare, they would send him five hundred muskets and four twenty-pound guns. Subsequently the council acknowledged itself willing to aid him with five hundred Europeans and twelve hundred sepoys, if he paid five lacs of pagodas for them, thus exasperating him yet more. Triumphant over his Mahratta foes, so far as to make it their interest to accept tribute and depart from his dominions, he repeatedly declared that a day of reckoning between him and the English, who had so often deceived him, would yet come.

In July, 1771, the Nabob of Baroch, unsought, repaired to Bombay, and concluded a treaty with the council, by which they were entitled to have a factory at his capital. This treaty was not signed until the last day in November, and it amounted to an alliance offensive and defensive. The nabob had gone to Bombay for the purpose of engaging the council in his interests; and with the intention, at the same time, of betraying them whenever his interests in so doing might appear. He soon violated all the stipulations of the treaty, and the council recalled their resident from his court. This step was followed up by a military expedition against him, which was dispatched from Bombay under Mr. Watson, "the superintendent of marine," and Brigadier-general Wedderburn. The troops departed from Bombay November the 2nd. On the 14th, General Wedderburn reconnoitred the place, and was killed while so doing. On the 16th, batteries were opened against it, and on the 18th it was taken by storm. The loss of the English was considerable, especially in officers, of whom five were killed, exclusive of the general and a cadet, and six were wounded.

The council having concluded a treaty with Futty Sing Guicowar, the spoils were divided between that chief and the company. Besides the prize of the city, the revenues amounted to seven lacs of rupees.

In the year 1772 special negotiations were opened with the court of Poonah for the acquisition of Salsette, Bassein, and Caranga. These were of extreme importance, as their possession by an enemy endangered Bombay itself. Mhade Rao, who then governed the Mahrattas, knew the value of these places as well as the English, and refused to cede them at any price. That chief died in November, and was succeeded by his brother Narrain Rao. In August, 1773, Narrain was

murdered in his palace of Poonah by the agents of Ragoba, his uncle, who was at once proclaimed. This chief determined to make war upon the Carnatic, not, it would seem, to make a permanent conquest, but "to carry chout." Upon proceeding for this purpose with his army, a revolution took place in his capital, which he had to hurry back and suppress. The council resorted to means which were at least of questionable policy and justice to induce Ragoba to cede Salsette and Bassein, but were again defeated. The feuds then existing among the Mahratta chiefs caused the negotiations of the English and their apparent support of Ragoba in several of his misdeeds to be regarded with prejudice by various powerful chiefs, and laid the foundations of troubles to come. During the negotiations with Ragoba, the council learned that the Portuguese contemplated the conquest of Salsette. The council resolved to seize the island, or, as they represented the matter, to make available the disposition of the inhabitants to surrender it to them. On the 12th of December, 1774, the forces left Bombay. On the 28th the fort of Tannat was taken by storm, but not without great loss, Commodore Watson being numbered among the slain. The Mahrattas fought desperately, but British skill and valour conquered. A monument was erected at Bombay to the memory of the gallant Watson.

The first matter of great concern to the council of Madras, during the period which has been already noticed in reference to Bengal and Bombay, was the settlement of the Northern Circars. The French having resumed their possessions in India, in consequence of the treaty of peace in Europe, the president of Madras, in 1765, suggested to Clive, then in Bengal, the desirableness of procuring from the Mogul summids for the circars of Rajah, Mundry, Ellore, Mustaphanagur, Chicacole, and Condavir or Guntoor. On the 14th of October the council of Madras informed the directors that at the request of Mr. Palk, president of Fort St. George, Lord Clive had obtained the summids from the Mogul. Differences arose with the soubahdar of the Deccan as to the occupation of the circars, and a treaty was formed with his highness, by which he recognised that occupation, on condition of military aid in the defence of his own territory, or of war occurring between him and any other potentate. Clive appears to have acquiesced in this arrangement, and even to have promoted it, although it was contrary to the policy the directors had ordered to be pursued. The councils of the three presidencies had now involved themselves in treaties with all



the surrounding chiefs which were incompatible, and impracticable, involving the constant peril of war, and of breach of faith. It was next to impossible that the English could either engage in any of the native disputes, or refrain from doing so, without loss of honour. By disobedience to the simple and honest policy imposed by the court of directors, the agents in India had involved the company in complications which were inextricable. The letters from the directors on receipt of the intelligence of the treaty with the soubahdar of the Deccan are full of sense and spirit, and lay down principles that are indisputably just for the conduct of their servants in all dealings with the native powers.

The council at Madras was exposed to great anxiety during 1766 from the progress and ambition of Hyder Ali. His troops commanded all the passes from the upper country into the Carnatic. His cavalry hovered about like birds of prey, and it was reported that he had obtained a sumnid from the soubahdar of the Deccan for his own possession of the Carnatic. Hyder's manœuvres were as treacherous as those of the soubahdar, and as cunning as those of that ruler were weak. The Madras council was now obliged to adopt vigorous measures in regard to Hyder. They sent troops into various refractory districts where his agents had excited the polygars to revolt. They formed a new covenant with the soubahdar of the Deccan, in virtue of which he consented to dismiss his army, called by the directors "a useless rabble," and to allow his places of strength to be garrisoned by the British. It is probable that his highness had no intention of acting upon this covenant beyond a certain show of doing so in the first instance, for the stipulation was never properly carried into effect. The soubahdar was without honour or principle, and was ready to unite with Hyder or the Mahrattas against the company, as either might offer him the higher pecuniary inducement. Hyder, having settled for the time his differences with the Mahrattas, found means of inducing the soubahdar to join him in hostilities against the English. A war now broke out of a most formidable nature, in which the Mysorean freebooter made able use of the vast amount of arms and military stores with which the Bombay council, probably in view of their own profit, had supplied him, in spite of the company's orders to the contrary. The war itself must be treated in a separate chapter. The council of Madras opened a correspondence with that of Bombay for consultation as to mutual defence, as well as the separate action of each presidency upon a

common plan. The policy of the Madras government, and its opinion of the crisis, were set forth in its despatches to the directors. It urged upon the company the absolute necessity of subduing Hyder, if the peace of the Carnatic were to be secured. The chief apprehension of the Madras government as to Hyder was thus expressed:—"It is not only his troublesome disposition and ambitious views now that we have to apprehend, but that he may at a favourable opportunity, or in some future war, take the French by the hand, to re-establish their affairs,—which cannot fail to be of the worst consequence to your possessions on the coast. He has money to pay them, and they can spare and assemble troops at the islands, and it is reported that he has already made proposals by despatches to the French king or company in Europe."\*

Meanwhile, the indefatigable Hyder threatened Madras itself, when the council thus wrote to the directors:—"The continual reinforcements we had sent to camp had reduced our garrison so low, we were obliged to confine our attention entirely to the preservation of the Fort and the Black Town, for which purpose it was necessary to arm all the company's civil servants, the European inhabitants, Armenians, and Portuguese." On the 29th September, when the enemy moved off, the council again wrote:—"As it is uncertain when the troubles we are engaged in will end, and as we must in the course of the war expect to have many Europeans sick, we must earnestly request you to send out as large reinforcements as possible." This letter reached the court by the *Hector* on the 22nd April, 1768. The reply was one of the most masterly despatches ever sent to India. The principles and policy it expresses do honour to the company, and refute many calumnies as to their territorial aggrandizement. The company was not served by men able or honest enough to carry out the views of the directors, who thus wrote:—

"The alarming state of our affairs under your conduct, regarding the military operations against the soubahdar of the Deccan, joined with Hyder Ali, and the measures in agitation with the Mahrattas in consequence thereof, requiring our most immediate consideration, we have therefore determined on this overland conveyance by the way of Bussorah, as the most expeditious way of giving our sentiments to you on those important subjects.

"In our separate letter of the 25th March, we gave you our sentiments very fully on your treaty with the soubahdar of the Deccan.

"After having for successive years given it as your opinion, confirmed by our appro-

\* Letter to Court, 21st September, 1767.



bation, that maintaining an army for the support of the soubahdar of the Deccan was endangering the Carnatic, and would tend to involve us in wars, and distant and expensive operations, and the grant of the Circars was not to be accepted on such terms, you at once engage in that support, and send an army superior to that which, in the year 1764, you declared would endanger your own safety.

"The quick succession of important events in Indian wars puts it out of our power to direct your measures. We can only give you the outlines of that system which we judge most conducive to give permanency and tranquillity to our possessions.

"We should have hoped that the experience of what has passed in Bengal would have suggested the proper conduct to you: we mean, when our servants, after the battle of Buxar,\* projected the extirpation of Sujah Dowlah from his dominions, and the giving them up to the king. Lord Clive soon discerned the king would have been unable to maintain them, and that it would have broken down the strongest barriers against the Mahrattas and the northern powers, and therefore wisely restored Sujah Dowlah to his dominions.† Such, too, should be your conduct with respect to the nizam‡ and Hyder Ali, neither of whom it is our interest should be totally crushed.

"The dewannee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with the possessions we hold in those provinces, are the utmost limits of our views on that side of India. On the coast, the protection of the Carnatic and the possession of the circars, free from all engagements to support the soubahdar of the Deccan, or even without the Circars, preserving only influence enough over any country power who may hold them, to keep the French from settling in them; and, on the Bombay side, the dependencies thereon, the possessions of Salsette, Bassein, and the castle of Surat. The protection of these is easily within the reach of our power, and may mutually support each other, without any country alliance whatever. If we pass these bounds, we shall be led on from one acquisition to another, till we shall find no security but in the subjection of the whole, which, by dividing your force, would lose us the whole, and end in our extirpation from Hindostan.

"Much has been wrote from you and from our servants at Bengal, on the necessity of checking the Mahrattas, which may in some

degree be proper; but it is not for the company to take the part of umpires of Hindostan. If it had not been for the imprudent measures you have taken, the country powers would have formed a balance of power among themselves, and their divisions would have left you in peace; but if at any time the thirst for plunder should urge the Mahrattas to invade our possessions, they can be checked only by carrying the war into their own country. It is with this view that we last year sent out field-officers to our presidency at Bombay, and put their military force on a respectable footing; and when once the Mahrattas understand that to be our plan, we have reason to think they will not wantonly attack us.

"You will observe by the whole tenour of these despatches, that our views are not to enter into offensive wars in India, or to make further acquisitions beyond our present possessions. We do not wish to enter into any engagements which may be productive of enormous expenses, and which are seldom calculated to promote the company's essential interests. On the contrary, we wish to see the present Indian powers remain as a check one upon another, without our interfering; therefore, we recommend to you, so soon as possible, to bring about a peace upon terms of the most perfect moderation on the part of the company, and when made, to adhere to it upon all future occasions, except when the company's possessions are actually attacked; and not to be provoked by fresh disturbances of the country powers to enter into new wars."\*

The die was cast as to hostilities with Hyder; both the Madras and Bombay governments were in collision with him, and Bengal sent such assistance as was deemed judicious and practicable.

When, at last, a treaty was made with Hyder, the Circars, which had never been fairly brought under the company's management, were placed by the council under its sole control, the zemindars and other great landholders offering violent opposition. In 1769, however, the subjugation of this refractory spirit was effected, and the company made such arrangements as to its lands as suited its own interests. The introduction of English law to Madras proved a source of contest and confusion, the natives utterly detesting it, and the English using it against the natives as a means of oppression. M. Auber describes the folly displayed in working English institutions, and the turmoil attending it, in the following terms:—"At a moment when the company's affairs on the coast demanded the utmost attention of the council;

\* Court's Letter, dated the 13th of May, 1768.

\* Recorded in a previous chapter.

† An account of these transactions has been given in a previous chapter.

‡ The word nizam is used interchangeably with soubah and soubahdar in Indian despatches and state papers.



when the whole of the country from Tinnevely to the Kistna was involved in troubles, and when the enemy were ravaging the Carnatic, the council were harassed by the violent and litigious proceedings of some members of the grand jury, who obstinately persevered in pressing matters and presentments, which threw the settlement into contentions and embarrassments; whilst, on other occasions, they declined to make a return to any of the bills of indictment brought before them. The jurisdiction of the mayor's court, under the charter, became matter of doubt and dispute; the one party construing the word *factory* in the most extensive latitude, the other taking it in its literal and strict sense."

Suspicious began to be entertained that the French were instigating Hyder and the nizam against the English. As soon as the peace with France restored to that nation its Indian possessions which had been conquered, symptoms of a preconceived determination to gain power were evinced. These were slowly, but surely, developed: still the company's servants felt no apprehensions, the French being relatively weak; moreover, the rapid passage of events between the English and the native princes diverted the councils of Bombay and Madras from noticing the procedure of their old competitors for power.

In 1769 the French made various demonstrations of a nature to lead to the conclusion that hostile movements against the English were contemplated. Pondicherry was fortified, under the pretence of its being in danger from the country powers. Pretexts for fortifying the factories in Bengal were also put forward, as noticed in a previous chapter. These simultaneous efforts to strengthen their positions, when there was really no enemy, awakened the suspicions of the English. Two French transports, of large capacity, had proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope for provisions. Tidings came from the Mauritius that French ships, full of men and military stores, had been seen there. A new settlement was made on the eastern coast of Madagascar, which, from the accounts forwarded of it to Madras, was intended as a military depot, both for men and munitions of war destined for employment in the East. From the Archipelago, French ships of war were reported as cruising about suspiciously, and as having on board troops.

While the council's attention was drawn by so many rumours to the French, the perpetual conflicts among the native powers threatened to involve the company in innumerable wars. The Mahrattas desired the virtual conquest of Mysore. Hyder resolved to resist their demands for chout. The Nabob of Arcot

favoured the pretensions of the Mahrattas. The nizam watched vigilantly for any opportunity which might arise for plunder, by those powers exhausting one another. All these royal robbers sought the aid of the company, pleading the different treaties in which the shallow policy of the councils of Bombay and Madras had involved that body.

Hyder refused the Mahrattas chout in 1770: they made war upon him. He demanded the aid of the company, on the ground of the treaty made the previous year. The council of Madras considered themselves absolved from any obligations of alliance, as Hyder was himself the aggressor. He well knew that they were only eager to escape all obligations on their part, and yet to secure all advantages of the treaty from him. An incurable resentment against the English name and race seized possession of his mind.

Both the councils of Madras and Bombay were entangled in fresh difficulties by the arrival of Sir John Lindsay at the latter place. That officer, besides his influence and rank as an admiral, had received extraordinary powers from the English government, of which the directors disapproved. He declared to both the councils that he was minister plenipotentiary from the royal government. In virtue of this office, he inquired into the causes and conduct of the late war with Hyder. He brought a letter to the Nabob of the Carnatic, from the king, and demanded all the company's papers and documents as he might require them. The council of Madras determined to resist these demands, having no instructions from "their constituents," as they termed the directors on that occasion. The English government had acted without proper concert with the company, and the result was dangerous to the English interests in India. Lindsay treated the council with contempt. The latter body, strong in experience, knowledge of local relations, and sure of obedience from all the company's servants, was resolute in resisting the alleged powers of Sir John. He entered into private correspondence with the nabob, who artfully treated him as a superior authority, and faithlessly intrigued with him against the company. The council was at this time involved in so many disputes, that it is surprising they could attend, in any measure, to the company's trade. Among other quarrels, they had one of serious magnitude with the celebrated Eyre Coote, at that time major-general, and appointed commander-in-chief of the company's forces in Madras by the directors. Sooner than submit to the jealous dictation of the council, General Coote returned to England, and the court of directors censured the council. Examination



of the folly and disobedience of the councils of the three presidencies, and passing votes of merited censure upon them, might have occupied the whole time of the honourable court.

The Nabob of Arcot raised claims upon the Nabob of Tanjore, which during 1770 gave the council of Madras much occupation. The Tanjore nabob gave the English a reluctant support during the Mysorean war, and refused to contribute to the Nabob of Arcot's expenses in connection with that contest, although Tanjore was a rich territory, and the English, acting in the name of the government of Arcot, preserved the peace of the country. Hyder Ali fomented this dispute. It was also discovered that he carried on a correspondence with the French at Pondicherry, while they carried on the new works there.

Sir John Lindsay was succeeded, in 1770, by Admiral Sir Robert Harland, with the same powers. The fleet on the Indian station was much strengthened under the command of Sir Robert. The new admiral had received instructions from the king to treat the company's representatives with careful respect, and to uphold their dignity before the native rulers. When Admiral Harland arrived, he found affairs in great confusion, the result of his predecessor's wrong-headedness. The Nabob of the Carnatic had, with the concurrence of Sir John Lindsay, invited the Mahrattas to join in a confederacy against Hyder, contrary to treaty, and as the council believed, contrary to reason.

Major-general Coote had been prevailed upon to return to India, and the crown conferred upon him the honour of a Knight of the Bath. This was before Sir John Lindsay returned home, and at the same time the same honour was conferred upon him also. The royal government took a most extraordinary course on this occasion, sending the insignia to the nabob, with directions for the investiture. Whether this was the result of some joint intrigue of Lindsay and Coote to spite the council does not appear, but the humiliation it inflicted upon the president was very acceptable to those chiefs. Differences between the nabob and certain rajahs having arisen, an appeal to arms was made, and Brigadier Smith, at the head of a British force, marched against them in April, 1771. Operations were conducted until the 27th of October, when peace was made without the intervention of the council. It appeared as if Lindsay, Coote, and the nabob had entered into a confederacy to ignore the company:—"Sir Robert Harland reached Madras, in command of a squadron of his majesty's ships, on the 2nd of September. He announced

his arrival to the council, whom he met assembled on the 13th, and he informed them that he possessed full powers, as the king's plenipotentiary, to inquire into the observance of the eleventh article of the treaty of Paris; and that he had a letter from his majesty to the nabob. The letter was delivered to his highness by the admiral, the troops in the garrison attending the ceremonial. On the 1st of October, having intimated to the council his readiness to be of any use in the progress of their affairs, he quitted the roads, in order to avoid the approaching monsoon, and retired to Trincomalee, dispatching a vessel to ascertain the state of the French force at the Mauritius, which was reported to be very considerable."\*

Sir Robert Harland soon fell into the snares of the nabob, who induced him to favour an alliance with the Mahrattas against Hyder. The council refused to obey the plenipotentiary, declaring themselves ready to obey all constitutional authorities, such as parliament or the courts of law, but refusing to recognise the admiral in any other capacity than as commander of the king's ships, in which office they would co-operate with him. They persisted in refusing to violate the treaty with Hyder. The alliance offered by the Mahrattas was one which he sought to force upon the nabob, as the admiral himself admitted, by the threat of fire and sword. They refused finally to accept the alliance, and advised the admiral, by a diversion on the Malabar coast, to distract the Mahrattas, while the council would take such care of the Carnatic as their experience suggested, and their power allowed. The alliance proposed by the Mahrattas, obliging the nabob to send troops to their aid, had a significance the admiral did not see. The nabob in accepting a forced alliance, and sending troops into the field to avert the menace of the power thus making itself an ally, accepted conquest, and would be regarded in future by the Mahrattas as dependent upon them.

Matters became worse between the admiral and the council, until they issued in an open rupture. The conduct of the admiral was in violation of the company's charter, and the council resolutely maintained the rights of their employers.

During the year 1772 various expeditions were made, all of them successful, against various polygars who refused to comply with the requisitions of the nabob. Brigadier-general Smith, having accomplished the military enterprises referred to, returned to Madras, and resigned his command. Sir Robert Fletcher was nominated to take it.

\* Auber, vol. i. p. 308.



Immediately violent altercations arose between him and the council, discord between commanding officers and councils seldom ceasing in any of the presidencies. Sir Robert was obliged to resign, and Brigadier Smith resumed the command.

On the 31st of January, 1773, Mr. Dupré resigned the office of president, which was assumed by Mr. Wynch. The Rajah of Tanjore refusing all allegiance to the Nabob of the Carnatic, Brigadier-general Smith marched to Tanjore, took it by storm, and made prisoners of the rajah's family. It was soon discovered that the Dutch were the chief instigators of the rajah. He had, contrary to his allegiance, as a tributary of the nabob, made over various strong positions to the Dutch, who were compelled by the British ships, and troops acting in conjunction with the forces of the nabob, to abandon them, under circumstances of much humiliation. The conduct of the Dutch was marked by prevarication and bad faith.

Throughout the year 1774 the council was troubled by the caprice of the nabob, whose views were constantly changing; who

regulated his policy towards others by his relative power; the resources of whose country were exhausted, while his avarice still craved; whose ambition was as large as his means were inadequate for even the feeblest enterprise. It was scarcely possible for the council not to perceive that the time was fast approaching when the English must assume the entire control of the nabob's dominions, or see the Carnatic overrun by Hyder, the Mahrattas, or the nizam.

During the period to which this chapter refers, Warren Hastings for several years held the high post of member of council. It is probable that to him chiefly, if not exclusively, the credit of every bold and firm measure taken was due. Yet less is known of Hastings's conduct during his membership of council at Madras than of any other period of his history. His novel career in the capital of the presidency was much to his credit. His duties to the company were discharged with such ability, that he was nominated to the most important office in India, the presidency of the council of Bengal.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

### WAR WITH HYDER ALI OF MYSORE.

IN previous chapters, especially the last, reference has been made to Hyder Ali, the Rajah, or, as he preferred being called, the Nabob of Mysore. In the geographical portion of this work descriptions will be found of every part of Southern India, and very particular descriptions of the highlands, and the whole region of the Deccan. A military writer, who made various campaigns in the Deccan during the last century, describes the climate as very favourable for military operations:—"Especially in the high country of Mysore, it is temperate and healthy to a degree unknown in any other tract of the like extent within the tropics. The monsoons, or boisterous periodical rains, which, at two different periods, deluge the countries on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, have their force broken by the ghauts or mountains, and from either side extend to the interior in fertilizing showers, and preserve both the verdure of the country and the temperature of the climate almost throughout the year; inso-much that the British army remained in tents and never went into cantonments throughout the whole year."

In this country of Mysore there arose a man of eminent daring and ability, already repeatedly before the reader as Hyder Ali. It is unnecessary to relate his history; no number of volumes could comprise the story of every able and daring Indian adventurer, native and European, whose sword or whose intrigues have been felt in India. It is sufficient to tell that Hyder was of obscure origin, and in one of the wars of which the great table-land of the Deccan had been the theatre time out of mind, he distinguished himself as a volunteer. He was then twenty-seven years of age. His daring courage made him a conspicuous person, and he gradually attached to himself a body of freebooters. It was not uncommon in India to begin a war-like career as leader of banditti, and end it as a powerful rajah or nabob. Hyder was one of the most remarkable instances of such a gradation. By robbery he became enriched, and he used his riches for the purpose of becoming a plunderer on a grander scale. While yet he was no more than a great robber, he fell in with a holy Brahmin, by whose cunning he was much assisted, and who probably gave



him the first notions of political intrigue. Chiefs and monarchs in India honoured riches more than high-born persons in any other country. Hyder's reputation for riches, no matter how acquired, gained him much admiration; and his well-known ability to defend what he had acquired added to that admiration. He became recognised as a chief by chiefs, and was known as the fougedar of Dindigul. He soon put down all refractory neighbours, either by artifice or the sword; it was difficult to decide in which way he was the greater. His friend the Brahmin obtained access to the court of Mysore, and apprised his colleague in former predatory adventures of all political matters that might any how be turned to their joint account.

A mutiny broke out in the army of Mysore. Hyder bravely and promptly put it down, earning and receiving royal gratitude. His beloved Brahmin accused the richest chiefs of Mysore as the instigators of the revolt. They were seized, punished in person, and deprived of their estates. Hyder and the Brahmin profited largely by the forfeitures. He had become a chief, high in royal favour, but he was still a robber. He had as little indisposition to kill as to steal. Murder, as an accessory to plunder, was simply regarded as a necessary means towards a very unobjectionable end. He gradually became a rebel, as well as a robber. He took advantage of certain mutinies of the troops for pay, to quiet or quell the disturbances, and gain the unlimited confidence of the monarch, that he might ultimately the more securely dethrone him. After a variety of ingenious and infamous stratagems, in concert with the Brahmin, he succeeded. He and the Brahmin eventually betrayed one another, and this cunning adversary nearly ruined Hyder more than once. The courage of the bold bandit never forsook him, and his competition with his wily antagonist so sharpened his wits that he at last excelled the Brahmin, and all other Brahmins in Mysore, however wicked and acute in the arts of cunning, dissimulation, and far-sighted intrigue. Koonde Row (such was the crafty Brahmin's name) was at last destroyed. The Rajah of Mysore himself became a victim, and Hyder had no more rivals in that country either as to craft or power. Once established on the throne, he scented all disaffection afar off, and soon tried the value of his sabre in suppressing it. He became rich exceedingly, little by little extended his territory, and who could extend territory in India, in his time, without coming into collision with the English? When he became rich, the Mahrattas invaded his country. He fought them with great gallantry, but their cavalry

came as the locusts and eat up every green thing. Hyder purchased them off again and again, when all the resistance of valour and genius was useless against equal valour, perhaps equal genius, and far superior numbers.

Mr. Thornton says the politics of the Decan at this period (1763) presented "an entangled web, of which it is scarcely practicable to render a clear account." Probably Hyder had a clearer view of them than any one else, not even excepting Clive or Hastings. Previous to this time Hyder had intercourse with the Bombay government, which was not always complimentary, but not on the whole unfriendly. The government of Madras had, however, formed a league with Nizam Ali against him. The various events already related in previous chapters rapidly occurred, and Hyder had his part in them, or watched them with the vigilance of a statesman. He could neither read nor write, but his memory was wonderful, and his agents were everywhere. His spies overran the country. The French possessed Hyder's sympathy, and to the designs of Lally he was especially no stranger.

In 1766, the Mahrattas, Nizam Ali, and the Madras government were allied against Hyder. The Mahrattas were, of course, first in the conflict. They overran half the Mysore territory before their allies were ready. He bought them off just in time to avert their junction with the other allied forces. The army of the nizam, supported by the British, advanced to the northern limits of Mysore. The English commander, Colonel Joseph Smith, suspected both the nizam and the Mahrattas. Hyder Ali bought off the nizam, as he had already obtained the neutrality of the Mahrattas. The stupid council of Madras would not pay attention to Colonel Smith's information, nor adopt any measures of defence. Their conceit and impertinence disgusted the army, and nearly brought ruin upon the presidency. The nizam joined Hyder. Their combined forces pressed upon the English. Colonel Smith was intelligent and brave, but ignorant of the country. He guarded passes which were not likely to be penetrated; he left unguarded those, more especially one, by which the troops of Hyder poured down like a torrent, sweeping away the outposts, baggage, cattle, and supplies of the English. Hosts of wild horsemen thundered down with the violence and rapidity of a cataract upon the English. Colonel Wood was dispatched from Trichinopoly. Smith directed his energies to form a junction with him, but was attacked by an immensely superior force, which he defeated, slaying two thousand men, himself losing but



one hundred and seventy in killed and wounded. The Mysoreans came on with their hosts of cavalry eddying like a flood, and sweeping away rice-carts, bullocks, and stragglers. Smith, after his men had fought, and marched, and hungered for twenty-seven hours, at last formed the desired junction with Wood. Smith and Wood joined their forces at Trincomalee, where they expected to find adequate stores. The council had, however, thought of nothing but the grandeur of their own policy; no preparations were made for the support of armies in the presence of powerful invaders. Smith was obliged to move away eastward in quest of provisions, leaving his stores, sick, and wounded in Trincomalee. The enemy prepared to assault the place, but Smith, having found some supplies, returned opportunely for its relief. After a short time another march to gather provisions was necessary; the whole army was occupied in foraging. Forty thousand horsemen of the allies flew around the English, crossing every rice-swamp or corn-field, occupying the tracts which served as roads, desolating the villages, devouring hidden stores of edibles, ravaging everywhere and everything. As vultures gathered upon a field of carrion, the Mysorean troopers found nothing too mean for their prey.

Still the reputation of English valour awed back the savage hordes, and Hyder hoped only to conquer when the English, worn out by fatigue and hunger, could no longer march or fight. In the terrible emergency of the English, relief was found by the discovery of some hidden hordes of grain. The English were fed, and could therefore fight. Hyder knew of their distress, but not of the discovered supplies and the recruited strength which they brought.

On the 26th of September, 1767, the foe opened a distant cannonade against the left of the English lines. Smith moved round a hill, which arose between him and the main body of the opposing forces. He hoped to take them in flank upon their left. The enemy perceived his movement, but did not understand it. They made a movement to correspond with their idea of that of Smith, which they believed to be a retreat. At the same moment both armies were moving from opposite directions round the hill, but the collision coming soon was unexpected by either. Both armies saw the importance of gaining the hill. Captain Cooke succeeded in obtaining it, but not without a close competition. The enemy ascended to a range of crags facing a strong position. Taking them in flank, Cooke gallantly and skilfully carried the post. A regular battle then ensued. The English had

fourteen hundred European infantry, and nine thousand sepoy. Their cavalry consisted of fifteen hundred wretchedly conditioned men, miserably mounted, belonging to the nabob, and a small troop of English dragoons. The enemy numbered forty thousand cavalry, and an infantry force a little less numerous. The enemy had a vast number of useless guns, and about thirty pieces fit to bring into action; the English had as many. The allies formed a crescent, and manœuvred to enclose the small English force. The battle opened by a cannonade, the enemy firing with eagerness and rapidity, but no judgment. The English fired slowly until they found the range, and then served their guns with great quickness as well as deadly aim. The ordnance of the allies was soon silenced. The English then suddenly opened their whole cannonade upon the thick columns of the cavalry, which were arranged in a manner exposing them to such a casualty. The troopers, eager to charge, bore for a few minutes this galling fire, while great numbers fell. No orders were given, the columns broke, and the vast masses of ill-posted horsemen dispersed upon the field. Hyder, with the sagacity of his keen intellect, perceived that the battle was lost in time to draw off his guns. He exhorted his ally to retire, but the nizam became furious with disappointment and rage, and refused to leave the field. Smith ordered his whole line to charge, the nizam became panic-struck, and ordered a retreat. A curious incident is recorded as having then occurred. The nizam had posted a long line of elephants in the rear of his army, bearing his harem and other adjuncts to his pleasure. The ladies were invited to view the destruction of the English, as, long after, the Russian general, Prince Menschikoff, with oriental taste and similar fortune, invited the Russian ladies to do at Alma. When the nizam directed that his elephants should be moved from the field, a lady called out, "They have not been so taught; they have been trained to follow the standard of the emperor." That standard was, soon in the advance, while English bullets flew among the bearers of the palanquins, and many fell for whom these missiles were not designed. The nizam, on a swift horse, attended by a chosen body of cavalry, fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving Hyder to draw off his army as best he could. The wearied English rested on the field of victory.

Next day the army of Hyder was observed in good formation and regular retreat. The English pursued, and captured forty-one pieces of cannon, in addition to nine which



were left upon the field; sixteen more were abandoned on the march, and fell into the hands of the English. Nearly five thousand men were numbered among the dead upon the field of battle or in the line of pursuit. The English had one hundred and fifty put *hors de combat*. The fugitives continued a hasty flight far beyond the probability, or even possibility, of pursuit. The English withdrew into cantonments as the rainy season approached.

Hyder Ali, ever indefatigable, even in defeat, continued in action, combating the monsoon and the skill of England, warring boldly with nature and science. He captured several small places belonging to the nabob, and then proceeded to attack Amboah, a place peculiarly situated, being built upon a mountain of smooth granite. Hyder laid regular siege to this place, and in five days rendered it no longer tenable, except the citadel, to which the garrison retired. The defenders were five hundred sepoys and a few Europeans, under the command of a brave and scientific officer named Calvert. The native governor was, what native governors usually were, faithless. He was detected, and confined; his guards were disarmed. Hyder's previous success having been through the information supplied by the traitor, he now knew not how to proceed. He accordingly made a breach in an inaccessible place, which was in vain attempted again and again, his troops reeling back after every attack discomfited, and leaving many of their comrades slain. Hyder sent a flag of truce, with eulogistic references to the bravery of the commander, who replied that Hyder had not yet come close enough to enable him to deserve the compliment. Another flag arrived with a large bribe, and the offer of the highest military honours in Hyder's service, if Captain Calvert would surrender the place. The reply was that the next messenger proposing dishonour would be hanged in the breach. From the 10th of November to the 7th of December all the efforts of Hyder were in vain. Colonel Smith left his cantonments and hastened to the relief of his brave brothers in arms. Great was his joy when he saw the British flag flying as he approached. Hyder perceiving the advance of Colonel Smith, raised the siege. The government directed that the sepoy regiment which defended the place should bear the rock of Amboah upon its colours.

Smith followed Hyder, but was compelled to give up the pursuit from the deficiency of his commissariat,—an impediment which has since often obstructed British military enterprise, when disgrace was still more reflected upon those in authority, to whom the

real derangement or neglect was attributable. Colonel Smith was joined by Colonel Wood, who advanced from Trichinopoly. Hyder was too much daunted by recent defeats to make any bold attempt to prevent this junction. Not that he wanted courage personally, but he knew that his troops were not of a quality to face the English after such signal and shameful defeats. Hyder was, however, vigilant and active as ever. He attempted various surprises upon convoys, but was defeated by the courage and constant watchfulness of the English officers.

At the close of the year 1767 he ascended the ghauts, leaving strong detachments of cavalry to watch and harass the English army, which was in the deepest distress from want of provisions, the government having wholly left it to itself, and the officers displaying but little talent in commissary affairs, although by skill and bravery in breach and battle having won for themselves a glorious renown. Hyder Ali now began to fear the English power. Forces from Bengal threatened Hyderabad. His ally, the nizam, now prepared to betray him, as both had betrayed everybody else that trusted them. Hyder was not to be deceived. He represented to the nizam that the latter had adopted a wise course, and pretended to believe that it was done to deceive the English, until affairs took a more favourable turn. He, however, intimated that in future the nizam's army and his own had better operate separately. The nizam affected to agree with all Hyder said, withdrew his army, and the next day openly offered alliance to the English against the man with whom he acted in the field the day before. This was perfectly in keeping with Mussulman faith on the part of one prince to another throughout Indian history. In the diplomatic game which followed, the English played as foolishly as was their custom. The nizam granted everything, on the condition that the English should pay him tribute, which placed matters pretty much as they were before: the English gained nothing but glory. The nizam also granted to the company the devannee of Mysore, on the condition that *when they conquered it*, he should receive a tribute. The nizam was beaten in battle, but reaped, through the vain and dull council of Madras, all the fruits of victory.

The chiefs on the Malabar coast, who had been reduced by Hyder, now revolted; and the government of Bombay took the field against him. Mangalore was captured at once; the commander of Hyder's fleet surrendered it. Various other places on the coast fell into the hands of the Bombay



officers. Canarese was attacked, but the British were repulsed even with slaughter. Hyder hastened to the coast with large forces. He approached with such rapidity and skill, and the English exercised so little vigilance, that he was upon them suddenly. In May he was before Mangalore. The English fled in boats, and with such precipitation and confusion that many were slain, and all their artillery and stores were ingloriously captured. Neither Smith nor Calvert was there. Eighty Europeans, and one hundred and eighty sepoy, sick and wounded, remained in the conqueror's hands. Hyder won the whole coast. He then proceeded to Bednore, whither he had summoned the zemindars and other holders of territorial possessions. He informed them that he knew they were more favourable to the English than to him, and that he would punish their disaffection by pecuniary fines.

Mr. Thornton thus describes what then took place:—"A list of the criminals was then produced, and against the name of each an enormous fine appeared. The conduct of Hyder Ali's affairs was marked by great precision; for every purpose there was a distinct provision. Among other establishments nicely contrived so as to contribute to the progress of the great machine of his government, was a department of torture. To this the offenders present were immediately consigned till their guilt should be expiated by payment of the sums in which they were respectively mulcted, and orders were issued for taking similar proceedings with regard to those whose fears had kept them away."

Hearing that the government of Bombay was making preparations to scour the coast of Malabar with a naval and military force which he could not resist, his genius suggested an expedient by which he might retire with some degree of military reputation, and with pecuniary advantage. The author last quoted thus describes his procedure to this intent:—"With the Malabar chiefs Hyder Ali adopted different means, but not less characteristic, nor less conducive to his interests. It was intimated to them that their Mysorean lord was tired of his conquests in Malabar, which he had hitherto found a source of charge rather than of profit; that if he were reimbursed the expenses incurred in their attainment, he was ready to abandon them; and that it was his intention that the territories of those who refused to contribute to that purpose should be transferred to those who acceded to the proposal. Not one incurred the threatened forfeiture, and Hyder Ali's officers retired from Malabar laden with the offerings of its chiefs."

The Madras government had organized no efficient means of gaining intelligence, and, therefore, were unable to apprise their officers of the route taken by Hyder. Colonel Wood reduced Baramahal, Salem, Coimbatore, and Dindigul, but was unable to retain his conquests, from the fewness of his troops and poverty of material. He attempted to guard the passes, but the enemy eluded his vigilance without difficulty, for he was wholly ignorant of the country, as were all his officers. The duty of providing guides—a task which the nabob could have easily accomplished—occurred to no one, or, at all events, was performed by none. Hyder wrested from Colonel Wood all the conquests the latter had made. Having at his command large bodies of cavalry, Hyder was enabled to confuse the English commander, so as to deprive him of all benefit arising from a well-concerted plan of action. The natives also constantly betrayed the English, surrendering strong places without a blow.\*

Colonel Smith was engaged in operations to the north. On the 2nd of May, Kistnagherry capitulated to him. In June he laid siege to Mulwagul, a strong place, from which he apprehended a protracted resistance. It was betrayed by the killadar. A brother of Mohammed Ali had married the sister of this person, and the former being fougedar of Arcot, had appointed his brother-in-law to exercise under him the fiscal administration of Trincomalee. The principal was removed from office, and the dependant, to avoid giving in his accounts to Mohammed Ali, went over to Hyder Ali. He was now desirous of a change, and offered to betray his trust, on condition that his accounts should be considered closed. Mohammed Ali consented; but there was still a difficulty—the garrison were faithful, though their commander was not. It happened, however, that the killadar had been instructed to raise as large a number of recruits for his master's infantry as was practicable, and to give special encouragement to men who had been disciplined by the English. The killadar informed his officers that he had succeeded in obtaining two hundred such recruits, being two complete companies, and that on an appointed night they were to arrive with their native officers. At the specified time a party of English sepoy appeared ascending by a prescribed route. They were led by a European officer, Captain Matthews, not only dressed, but painted, so as to re-

\* In recent times much has been written about the fidelity of the native troops previous to 1857, except in occasional defections. The truth is, the English in many wars suffered from the treasons of native auxiliaries and sepoy.



semble a native. At daylight the mask was thrown off, and the place was soon in the possession of the English.\* Colonel Smith followed up these successes by several others. An important accession to his strength was obtained by an alliance with the Mahrattas under Morari Rao. On the day when Smith formed his junction with the Mahrattas, Hyder entered Bangalore with the advanced guard of his grand army. He heard of the junction of the Mahrattas with Smith, and knew the locality of their encampment, for his spies were everywhere. He formed the daring resolution of sending a few hundred light cavalry that night into the Mahratta camp, with orders to penetrate to the tent of Morari Rao, and to return with his head, when the infantry would at once storm his camp, which, thrown into confusion by the loss of its chief, would be routed with slaughter. Morari Rao, like Hyder himself, had organized a spy system, which was nearly perfect. He became aware of the intended attack, and, as so small a body of cavalry were to conduct it, he gave strict orders that none of his troops were to mount, but that his cavalry should remain each man stationed at his horse's head. The orders to the whole force were, to be on the alert and attack all mounted men, without accepting any pass-word or explanation. This order was executed with precision, and had one unfortunate result in the death of Captain Gee, Colonel Smith's aide-camp, who, riding into the Mahratta lines, was mistaken for an enemy, and cut down. Hyder's cavalry were followed so closely by his infantry that the camp of Morari Rao would have been attacked in force, but for a curious incident. The state elephant of Morari received an accidental wound: irritated by this circumstance, and the alarm which raged around him, he broke loose, and rushed wildly through the camp, dragging the huge chain by which he had been picketed. Seizing this chain with his trunk, he hurled it furiously at the advancing cavalry of Hyder. They, supposing that the army of the Mahrattas were charging, broke, and rushed back over a column of infantry which was marching in support. The infantry, becoming alarmed, took to flight, and, before they could be rallied, morning dawned, revealing the sheen of the English bayonets as their lines of infantry were in motion.

The council of Madras sent civilian deputies to the camps of Smith and Wood, in a manner similar to that afterwards adopted in Europe by the French Convention, and with similar results. These delegates from the council

\* Thornton's *British India*, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 557, 558.

were arrogant and self-sufficient, overruling the conduct of the officers in matters beyond the comprehension of the meddlers. The English who occupied Mulwagul were removed by these "field deputies," and some of Mohammed Ali's troops placed there. The Mohammedan commandant sold the place to Hyder, as a previous Mohammedan commandant in Hyder's service had sold it to the nabob. Colonel Wood's strategy proved very deficient, and Smith's superior military talent was by this means, and the pompous interference of the "field deputies," rendered nugatory. When Mulwagul was betrayed, Wood made a movement for its recapture or relief. He was too late for the latter, and unable to accomplish the former. He attempted to take the rock by an escalade, which had nearly proved successful, through the activity, presence of mind, and bravery of an English officer named Brooke. The next day some light troops of Hyder appeared in the distance. Wood proceeded to reconnoitre, but soon perceived that an army of three thousand horse, and at least an equal number of infantry, with a powerful artillery, were making dispositions to surround his little band. With great presence of mind, more than his usual skill, and the most heroic courage, he forced his way through one body of the enemy after another, and united his little army in a regular retreat. Hyder's forces, increased by fresh accessions, hotly pursued. Although his cavalry were numerous, he used his well-appointed artillery, which was moved rapidly in front. The ground becoming less favourable for either cavalry or artillery, the infantry of both armies skirmished, and so closely pressed were the English, that a general action was inevitable, and as soon as the retreating force could find ground at all favourable, they took it, and stood on the defensive. The positions of the contending forces, and the mode of combat which was necessitated by the peculiar character of the ground, have been described with military accuracy by Colonel Wilks in the following passage:—"The whole extent of the ground which was the scene of the farther operations of the day consisted of a congeries of granite rocks, or rather stones of unequal heights and dimensions, and every varied form, from six to sixteen feet diameter, scattered 'like the fragments of an earlier world,' at irregular intervals over the whole surface of the plain. Obliquely to the right, and in the rear of the situation in which the advanced troops were engaged, was a small oblong hill, skirted at its two extremities with an impenetrable mass of such stones, but flat and covered with earth at the top to a suffi-



cient extent to admit of being occupied by rather more than one battalion: the rocky skirts of this hill extended in a ridge of about three hundred yards towards the plain of stones, and under its cover the Europeans had been placed in reserve until the action should assume a settled form. Hitherto, amid a mass of cover and impediment, which bade defiance to a regular formation, the intervals between the rocks, and sometimes their summits, were occupied by troops; the smaller openings were converted into embrasures for guns; and support successively arrived from each army to those who were engaged. It was a series of contests for the possession of rocks, or the positions formed by their union, without any possibility of the regular extension of a line on either side, so that a rock was sometimes seen possessed by Mysoreans within the general scope of English defence, and by the English among the Mysoreans." The overwhelming numbers of Hyder gave him the advantage, in spite of the intrepidity of Wood and his soldiers. The English were giving way, and there was danger of confusion among the sepoys, who seldom behaved even tolerably well in retreat. The tide of victory which set so strongly against the English was suddenly turned by Captain Brooke, the officer who distinguished himself so much in the escalade on the previous day. Brooke had then been wounded, but, notwithstanding his sufferings, fought with a lion heart throughout the conflict which it was now his fortune to terminate. His position was with the baggage, which, with the sick and wounded, he guarded. His troops consisted of four companies and two guns. He perceived a flat rock, which was unoccupied, but which, strategically, afforded a good position. He ascended it, as it was approached easily by a route circuitous and covered with crags and foliage. His wounded men drew up, leaning on such support as they could find. The guns were dragged up and placed in position, and directed upon the enemy with charges of grape, making havoc in their ranks. The position commanded the left flank of the enemy, upon which, if any aid arrived from Smith, it would have appeared. Hyder, perceiving suddenly on his extreme left a body of men which he supposed he had not seen before, believed that some detachments from Smith's division had arrived upon the field. This impression became a conviction, when suddenly, after the first terrible discharge of grape, Brooke and his whole force—even the sick and wounded—all who could raise their voice, suddenly shouted, "Hurrah! hurrah! Smith! Smith!" The British, not being aware of the stratagem, were also imposed upon, and,

repeating the hurrahs and cries of "Smith!" returned with such confidence to the battle that Hyder, believing Smith's whole army was upon him, ordered a retreat. The trick was soon discovered by the acute Hyder, and he again returned to the attack; but his troops were not convinced that new forces had not joined the English, and they came on cautiously. The British had, in the meantime, chosen strong ground, and made such new dispositions of their force as greatly increased their strength. Hyder forced his legions upon the English lines; but they were found to be impregnable. Night closed around the combatants, the English remaining possessors of the field. The rocks, behind which the few British found repeated refuge, saved them. There were not three hundred men put *hors de combat*. Hyder's loss was two thousand.

A conflict of generalship began the next day between the two commanders. Hyder could handle large bodies of men with an intuitive genius. He out-manœuvred the British commander, avoiding a battle, and swooping suddenly upon garrison after garrison, capturing forts, and making prisoners. Among other places he fell upon Bangalore, having, by superior strategy, diverted Wood's attention in another direction. Wood, leaving his baggage and heavy guns in "the Petat" of that city, hastened to encounter Hyder, where the wily chieftain was not to be found, having adroitly misled the British colonel. Hyder seized the whole baggage of Wood's army, the guns, stores of provisions, with merchandise, and some treasure. The inhabitants rushed to the fort for security. The garrison closed the gates to prevent that confusion and over-crowding which would have left the citadel indefensible. The crowd strained forward to save themselves, and their treasures, from the ravages of Hyder's army, until two thousand men, women, and children were crushed or trampled to death. Wood hastened from Oosoor just in time to find that Hyder was gone, and had taken with him everything of value in the place. The English were obliged to wander about for supplies, the council of either Madras or Bombay appearing to be only concerned in keeping up their dignity, and securing the chief cities of their presidencies. Hyder intercepted Wood's foraging expeditions, drove in his outposts, cut off his stragglers, tore away his newly acquired supplies, and day and night harassed his worn out troops. In one of these harassing attacks, after a running fight of several days and nights, and when Hyder was making the fiercest efforts to cut off the division of Wood, the English were relieved by his



sudden and unaccountable retreat. Major Fitzgerald and Smith's division were at hand. Hyder's scouts brought the intelligence; Wood was ignorant of it, until the roll of the English drums came with welcome and cheering music to his ear. Smith had gone to Madras, to bring the council to a proper appreciation, if possible, of the crisis, and Major Fitzgerald having assumed the command, with praiseworthy energy took measures to relieve Wood. Fitzgerald had very imperfect information of the colonel's condition, but he inferred, from a variety of minute indications, and from what he could gather of the movements of Hyder, that Wood, overpowered, was gallantly struggling in an unequal contest. Fitzgerald might have long wandered in quest of Wood, but for the heavy and in part useless cannonade kept up by Hyder, who, having captured the heavy guns at Bangalore, seemed desirous of annoying, or perhaps hoped to discourage the English by perpetually firing them. Fitzgerald, following the report, arrived in the nick of time to save Wood and his truly gallant little army. Warm were the congratulations of officers and soldiers when they met, and high rose their exultation as their enemy, although still many times outnumbering them, dared not to give them battle.

Fitzgerald found Wood in a state of great depression, which, after the first burst of joy upon their unexpected meeting, returned again. Fitzgerald wrote to Smith, informing him of this, who immediately presented the letter to the council, and Wood was ordered to be sent to them under arrest. This was very cruel, for, however incompetent to contend with such a soldier as Hyder, he was a brave soldier and good officer. He was not adapted to so important a command, but when it devolved upon him, he did his utmost to discharge its duties.

Fuzzul Oola Khan, one of the best of Hyder's generals, entered the province of Coimbatore, and with facility captured one fort after another, until he subjugated the province. An English sergeant named Hoskin was the only person in any command that showed adequate courage or ability. He was in command of an advanced post, with two companies of native infantry, and one gun. This little force occupied a mud fort, and defended it heroically and cleverly. The fort was not taken until it was thrown down and lay in rubbish around its defenders. Even then Hoskin disputed inch by inch of its ruins with the aggressors. The contest was sanguinary, and the greater part of the defenders perished before superior numbers. There are no records of Hoskin's fate; his

humble rank, in those days, would prohibit any notice of his ability or heroism, except such as the historian may gather from fragmentary references.

In other provinces the success of Hyder was as swift, and as shameful to the army of the nabob and the arrangements of the English, as in Coimbatore. In several instances the valour and talent of obscure English officers delayed the progress of the conqueror for a little, but that was all that the English and their allies were able to effect. As Hyder himself marched upon Eroad, he encountered suddenly Captain Nixon, with a force of fifty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Hyder attacked them with two divisions of infantry numbering probably ten thousand men, and a cavalry force still more numerous. Nixon drew up his small band in good position, and quietly awaited the approach of the enemy to within twenty yards, when they delivered a volley with such coolness that every shot told. The Europeans charged with the bayonet, an instrument of which the Mysoreans were much in dread. Hyder's infantry reeling under the well-directed volley, and charged with such impetuosity at the point of the bayonet, broke and turned from the field. Under another commander, the native army would probably have moved away; but Hyder knew what could be effected; he ordered his cavalry to charge the sepoys flank and rear, and they were sabred to a man. Poor Nixon was among the slain. An officer was the only man who escaped, Lieutenant Goreham. He was fortunately able to speak the language, and elaimed the humanity of a native officer.

Hyder Ali made use of Goreham to translate into English a summons to the garrison of Eroad to surrender; and to write a letter to its commander, Captain Orton, to come to his camp, and negotiate terms, promising a safe return if they could not agree. Orton trusted to the honour of a man who had no conception of it. He came. The officer next in command to Orton was one Robinson, whom Hyder had released on parole, but who broke his parole, and was permitted by the council of Madras to break it. Hyder declared that he was absolved from his obligation to Orton, by the knowledge that Robinson was serving against him. Hyder offered to spare the garrison, and permit them to march out and proceed to Trichinopoly, if Orton would order Robinson to surrender. Orton gave the order, Robinson obeyed it; Hyder walked into the place, triumphing alike over the stupidity and dishonour of the English officers, who acted like men demented. Robinson was clearly a man without personal scruple or military pride. Wilks explains the



conduct of Orton on the supposition that he was a drunkard. Hyder, who kept no faith, did not permit the garrison to go to Trichinopoly, but sent them prisoners to Seringapatam, where he cast them into a loathsome dungeon, and deprived them of adequate subsistence. He hated the English with a keen and un pitying animosity, and burned for every opportunity of gratifying and displaying his vindictiveness. The English had by tergiversation, time serving, and unsteadiness of policy merited his wrath and contempt. Had the councils of Madras and Bombay followed the honourable and wise policy pointed out by the directors, had they obeyed orders given repeatedly, and as often violated, the humiliations inflicted by Hyder would never have been visited upon them.

Hyder next proceeded to Caveriporam, and summoned the garrison to surrender, offering the release of the officer and garrison on parole. The conditions were accepted; Hyder seized the place, and violated as usual the terms of capitulation. The garrison, with Captain Frassain, their commander, were sent to the dungeons of Seringapatam, where already several of the prisoners, among whom Captain Robinson as the first victim, had already perished. The career of Hyder and his generals was one of complete success, the country everywhere within the sphere of operations being desolated or held by his forces. The council at Madras was terrified, and having provoked the war by their uncertain and arrogant policy, after having armed the enemy they thus provoked, they were glad to sue for peace. Hyder requested that an English officer should be sent to negotiate, and the choice of the council fell upon the gallant Captain Brooke, who had repeatedly distinguished himself by talent and valour in the field. Mr. Thornton thus describes the diplomatic occurrences which ensued:—"Hyder Ali requested that an English officer might be sent to confer with him, and Captain Brooke was dispatched thither in compliance with his wish. Hyder Ali expatiated on the aggressions of the English, and on his own desire for peace; on the exertions he had made to promote that object, and on the unreasonable manner in which his overtures had been rejected; on the wrongs which he had received from Mohammed Ali, and on the evil effects of that prince's influence in the councils of the English. He referred to the advantage of maintaining Mysore as a barrier to Arcot against the Mahrattas, and, advert ing to a threatened invasion by that power, intimated that he could not oppose both them and the English at the same time, and that it remained for the latter power to determine

whether he should continue to shield them from the former as heretofore, or whether he should unite with the Mahrattas for the destruction of the English. Captain Brooke, in reply, pointed out the superior advantages of an alliance with the English to one with the Mahrattas, to which Hyder Ali assented, and expressed a wish that Colonel Smith should come up to the army invested with full powers of negotiation. Captain Brooke suggested that Hyder Ali should send a vakeel to Madras. This he refused, on the twofold ground that it would give umbrage to the Mahrattas, and that at Madras all his efforts for peace would be frustrated by Mohammed Ali. Before taking his leave, Captain Brooke suggested to Hyder Ali that there was one proof of his friendly and pacific disposition which might readily and at once be afforded: the discontinuance of the excesses by which the country was devastated, and the defenceless inhabitants reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. The proposal met probably with all the success which the proposer expected. Of friendly professions Hyder Ali was profuse, but of nothing more. He answered that his treasury was not enriched by the excesses complained of, but that he had been compelled to accept the services of some volunteers whose conduct he could not control. The report of this conversation was forwarded to Madras, and Mr. Andrews, a member of council, was deputed to negotiate. He arrived in the camp of Hyder Ali on the 18th of February, 1769, and quitted it on the 21st, with proposals to be submitted to the governor and council, having previously concluded a truce for twelve days. The governor of Madras had every reason to desire peace: so great was their distress that the company's investments were entirely suspended, and it was stated that their resources were insufficient to carry on the war more than four months longer.\* Hyder Ali's proposals were, however, rejected, and hostilities recommenced. Colonel Smith, who had returned to the field, watched the movements of Hyder Ali with unceasing vigilance, and frequently counteracted them with admirable skill. The manœuvres of the two armies had brought them about one hundred and forty miles to the southward of Madras, when suddenly dismissing nearly the whole of his infantry, the greater part of his cavalry, together with his guns and baggage of every description, Hyder Ali, with six thousand horse, advanced rapidly towards that place, and on the 29th of March appeared before it. A small party of infantry joined him on the following day.

\* Separate Letter from Fort St. George, 8th March, 1769.



He immediately caused a letter to be addressed to the governor expressing a desire to treat for peace, and requesting that Mr. Dupré, a member of council and next in succession to the chair, might be deputed to attend him. The character of the man who made this demand, the place from which it was made, and the circumstances under which he had arrived there, all contributed to secure attention to the message. Mr. Dupré proceeded to the camp of Hyder Ali on the morning of the receipt of his letter, and, after a series of conferences, the terms of a treaty were agreed upon. The treaty was executed by the governor and council on the 3rd of April, and by Hyder Ali on the 4th. With reference to the circumstances under which the peace was concluded, Hyder Ali may be regarded as having displayed much moderation. A mutual restoration of captured places was provided for, and Caroor, an ancient depen-

dency of Mysore, which had been for some time retained by Mohammed Ali, was to be rendered back. After the conclusion of the treaty, difficulties arose from a demand of Hyder Ali for the liberation of some persons kept prisoners by Mohammed Ali, and of the surrender of some stores at Colar. With much persuasion the nabob was induced to comply with the former demand, and the latter was yielded by the British government, probably because it was felt to be vain to refuse."\*

Thus terminated the war with Hyder Ali—a war which was needlessly and improvidently commenced, and conducted, on the part of the Madras government, with singular weakness and unskilfulness. Its conclusion was far more happy than that government had any right to expect either from their own measures, or from the character of their enemy.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### HOME AFFAIRS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY FROM 1750 TO 1775—IMPEACHMENT AND ACQUITTAL OF CLIVE—CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMPANY.

THE history of events in India having been brought down to a considerably later period than that of the home incidents by which they were influenced, it is necessary to relate what happened in the company's proceedings as the tidings reached England of so many and great vicissitudes in the East. In relating those changes, such frequent reference has been made to the directions received in India from the company, and to the general policy of the directors, that it will not be necessary to recount the minutiae of the company's proceedings, nor to go much into detail in describing their fluctuating fortunes.

When the second half of the eighteenth century began, the company's affairs were much tried at home by the too great eagerness of the proprietary for large dividends. So long as there was prosperity in that respect, the proprietors of India stock did not much trouble themselves as to how events went in India. The successes of Clive, however, excited so much public attention, that from that period a more enlarged interest in the affairs of India was felt by the proprietary. During the year 1754 he was "a lion" in England, and popular opinion marked him out for future achievement.

In March, 1755, when he was appointed a member of council for Madras, the directors were nearly as much influenced by the general

feeling of the proprietors as by their own convictions that he was "the right man in the right place." The French were at this period the rivals most dreaded by the company and the country, and all measures adopted by them to curb French power in the East were regarded by the people of England as patriotic. This general sentiment strengthened the hands of the directors, and enabled them to supply men and material of war in a measure that would otherwise have been impossible, while the company was an object of such extensive commercial jealousy. One cause of much of the anxiety of the directors, and of a large amount of the mal-administration and confusion in India, was the complicated forms of government contrived in London for the regulation of the presidencies. Various attempts to remove and to modify this evil were made by the independent proprietors; Clive himself pointed it out with his usual vigour and clearness of expression, but no change found favour either with the directors or the councils in India. The difficulties under which the directors laboured from the slowness of communication, and their imperfect maritime arrangements, were then very great; while the rapid occurrence of great events in India baffled all their efforts to keep pace with them

\* *History of the British Empire in India*, Thornton, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 570—575.



in their arrangements. The councils at the presidencies, not fully appreciating these difficulties, constantly complained of neglect. They perpetually demanded men and stores, which they often recklessly employed on enterprises not contemplated nor approved of by the directors. The sense which the court entertained of their arduous difficulties from all these causes is well expressed in their letter to Bengal, 1760 :—"The forces that went abroad last year and are now destined for India will demonstrate that your employers labour incessantly to strengthen and protect their settlements, the glorious successes at home having enabled the government to grant us large succours, and we must gratefully confess the ministry's care of this company. The many remonstrances in almost every letter would have been spared, if you had reflected properly on our cruel and dangerous situation; our mercantile concerns always giving place to men and stores, when we could possibly obtain them; ever distressed for tonnage, as we carry abroad for the government seldom less than one thousand tons annually, exclusive of their men and baggage. The heavy demurrage incurred by ships detained by accident or otherwise in India; the immense expenses at Madras, with very scanty returns; your own charges very great, those of Bombay beyond all bounds; our settlements in Sumatra, at the same time, requiring large sums to put them in some state of security against enemies and dangerous neighbours; if these considerations had been duly weighed, your injurious insinuations of being neglected must have been turned into praise, that your employers could do so much under such untoward circumstances. We ourselves look back with wonder at the difficulties we have surmounted, and which, with our contracted capital, must have been impossible, if the proprietors, generously and without a murmur, had not consented to reduce their dividend twenty-five per cent.; but with all our economy and care, unless our servants studiously attend to lessen their charges and increase our advantages, the burthen will be too great for us to bear much longer."

The gratitude expressed towards the ministry in that letter was deserved, for upon the increase of the company's military forces, and especially when intelligence arrived that the French and other European rivals held out every temptation to the sepoys and other mercenaries in the English service to desert, measures were taken by the government to extend and enforce the company's military authority. An act was passed which enabled them to hold courts-martial for the punishment of mutiny and desertion.

When Clive returned to England the second time, he received personally, July 16th, 1760, from the directors, their "unanimous thanks for his many eminent and unparalleled services." It is a sad illustration of the corruption of human nature, that a few years later, when no further advantages were expected from Clive's military and administrative genius, these "many eminent and unparalleled services" were so little regarded, that the court of directors endeavoured to strip him of his property and appropriate it to themselves.

In 1760, however, it was the policy of the company to praise him; accordingly, in September of that year, the proprietors marked their sense of Colonel Clive's services by a public resolution of thanks to him, Admiral Pococke, and Colonel Lawrence. They also resolved unanimously, "that the chairman and deputy chairman, when they wait upon Vice-admiral Pococke, Colonel Clive, and Colonel Lawrence, will desire those gentlemen to give their consent that their portraits or statues be taken, in order to be placed in some conspicuous parts of this house, that their eminent and signal services to this company may be ever had in remembrance." Thus the proprietary at large rivalled the directors in eulogising and conferring honours upon him: a few years later, and their rivalry was as signal in vituperating him, and endeavouring to wrench from him property which he had acquired with the sanction of the honourable court. Clive was, however, destined to render further services to the company, and to be still more an object of their panegyric before ingratitude and persecution marked him for their victim. In 1764, after the unfortunate government of Mr. Vansittart in Bengal, Clive, as has been already shown in the history of that presidency, was appointed governor and commander-in-chief. The circumstances attending his appointment were of considerable home interest to the company, and excited much attention from all classes in the country.

There was a person in the direction of the company named Sullivan, by whose influence a series of injuries and annoyances to Clive were set on foot. Among other acts of hostility to him, they refused to recognise his jaghire, which had been conferred on him as already related with the company's approval. As this landed estate was worth £30,000 a year, and the company was his tenant, it was deemed a good prize, and of easy attainment. Clive was compelled to take proceedings for the recovery of his rights, the lawyers having declared that his claims were legal and equitable. The company had no ground for re-



sisting them except that to appropriate to themselves Clive's property would be an advantage. Sullivan was perhaps actuated as much by jealousy of Clive's influence as by cupidity. The latter motive was that which chiefly prevailed with the rest of the directors.

When the advices from Bengal, dated September 3rd, 1763, were received by the directors, great excitement was produced in the honourable court, and among the public. These advices were received on the 4th of February, 1764, and informed the directors of the war with Meer Cossim, and the death of Mr. Amyatt in the conflict at Moorshedabad. On the 8th of February an advertisement appeared in all the London newspapers, conveying the intelligence that had been received. A special grand court was called on the 27th of February, according to that provision in the constitution of the company, under which nine proprietors might call such a meeting. On the 29th of February, the 1st of March, and the 12th of that month, the court also assembled. All the revolutions which had taken place in Bengal since the first English acquisitions were made became subjects of discussion. Long and angry debates ruffled the usually smooth surface of the company's meetings. The appointment of Mr. Spencer to the governorship of Bengal which the directors had made was "referred back again to them," and an outcry for the re-appointment of Clive arose which could not be stifled. He was then Lord Clive. His lordship was present at the meeting on the 12th of March, and expressed his willingness to serve the company, if he were assured that the court of directors were well disposed towards him; but he declined coming to any resolution at that moment.

It soon transpired that Clive believed the deputy-chairman, Mr. Sullivan, was his enemy. That gentleman almost controlled the direction. He was a man of vast influence and energy, and pertinacious in the extreme. He and Clive were at constant variance; and Clive resolved never to serve abroad if Sullivan ruled at home. In a letter addressed to the court of directors, March 28th, he expressed his resolution in terms firm, but modest and polite. He declared that he considered the measures of Mr. Sullivan utterly destructive to the interests of the company; but expressed himself as ready, if that gentleman were deprived of what was called "the lead" in the company's affairs, to accept the appointment, even if the affairs of Bengal should prove to be in a worse condition than during the time of Suraj-ad-Dowlah. To this letter the directors made no reply. The annual election for the directory took place

on the 12th of April. On the 13th "new chairs were chosen, and Mr. Sullivan returned into the body of the court."

On the 18th the directors renewed their correspondence with Lord Clive, who attended there for the purpose of a conference, at their invitation, the next day. He then started new objections to his acceptance of the honours proffered to him. These were the presence in Bengal of Mr. Spencer, with whom he alleged many of the company's agents would no longer serve; and the disadvantage to himself personally of proceeding to India, while a law-suit in reference to his jaghire continued.

On the 27th the court rescinded the nomination of Mr. Spencer to the council of Bengal, and re-appointed him to Bombay. This appears to have conciliated Clive, who, knowing of the intention of the directors as to Spencer, prepared proposals of a concessive nature concerning his jaghire. Without waiting for the company's acquiescence in these, he accepted their nomination, and was sworn in, on the 30th of April, as president of Fort William and commander-in-chief of the company's forces there.

On the 5th of May the general court granted to his lordship the income of the jaghire for ten years—that is to say, they made him a present for ten years of an income which was his own for ever; and this was done with a show of magnanimity, and consideration for his "eminent and unparalleled services." The results of these proceedings have been recorded in their proper place in a previous chapter. The comments of Mr. Mill upon the whole of these transactions are inaccurate, and expressed in a spirit unjust to the company and to Clive. Whatever Mr. Mill has written receives currency to a greater extent among liberal persons not well informed on Indian subjects than the statements of any other writer obtain; it is therefore important to draw attention to instances in which he allowed his peculiar opinions to sway his mind, to the prejudice not only of the East India Company, but against the reputation of his own country. In the history of the East India Company, there were unhappily too many episodes discreditable to that body and to Englishmen; but it is unworthy of a great writer and able man to subserve his peculiar commercial, economical, or political opinions, by seizing upon every apparent error, and twisting it into a crime, and by perpetually turning aside from the true line of fact to attribute motive, and misconstrue the intention of those to whose opinions and principles he is opposed.

On the proceedings between Clive and the



company, related above, Mr. Mill thus animadvert:—"During the military and political transactions which so intensely engaged their servants in India, the courts of directors and proprietors remained for several years rather quiet spectators and warm expectants than keen and troublesome controllers. When they had been agitated for a while, however, by the reports of mismanagement which were mutually transmitted to them by Vansittart and his opponents; and, at last, when they were alarmed by the news of a war actually kindled with the nabob, of the massacre of so many of their servants, and the extensive spirit of mutiny among the troops, their sense of danger roused them to some acts of authority. Though Clive had quitted India with an act of insult towards his employers, which they had highly resented; though the directors had disputed and withheld payment of the proceeds of his jaghire, for which he had commenced a suit against them in the Court of Chancery; he was now proposed for governor, as the only man capable of retrieving their disordered and desperate affairs. Only thirteen directors, however, were found, after a violent contest, to vote for his appointment; while it was still opposed by eleven. Yet the high powers which he demanded, as indispensable for the arduous services necessary to be performed, though strongly opposed, were also finally conferred. He was invested with the powers of commander-in-chief, president, and governor in Bengal; and, together with four gentlemen, named by the directors, was to form a select committee, empowered to act by their own authority, as often as they deemed it expedient, without consulting the council, or being subject to its control." Almost every line of that passage makes a misstatement, or conveys by implication some misrepresentation.

It is not true that the court of directors remained quiet spectators rather than troublesome controllers. No impartial person can read the correspondence between the councils and the directors without coming to an opposite conclusion. A very cursory inspection of indisputable documents and authorities must assure any honest mind that the directors showed activity and vigilance, answering all correspondence with promptitude, and furnishing such means as they could against contingencies. So frequently was the company deceived, by both intentional and unintentional misstatements from the councils, that the measures they took did not correspond with eventualities. It is not true that there was any indisposition to control their servants, when clearly aware that those servants were doing wrong. There

were instances in which some want of energy was, in this particular, displayed, as has been noticed in previous chapters. But the time it required to receive intelligence and send back orders was so great as frequently to paralyse the power of the directors, and enable the councils to answer their masters with promises which they did not intend to perform. As soon as the directors knew that Spencer, Amyatt, and others had perversely disobeyed their orders and committed their honour, these persons were either removed to other spheres or dismissed. In the case of several, more especially Amyatt, the penal resolutions of the directors failed to take effect, as these persons had already paid the penalty of life, for their impolicy or oppression, upon the field of their errors. By the expression "warm expectants," Mr. Mill evidently means that the directors awaited eagerly for such tidings of revolution and plunder as would fill the treasury at home. If this be not the meaning, the whole tone of the context is such as to convey the impression. M. Auber\* remarks upon this passage:—"There is nothing which authorizes the inference that they were, at that period, 'warm expectants,' it is presumed either of new acquisitions or exorbitant gains. They desired the means of meeting the heavy expenditure which the operations in that country had entailed upon the company. They advised and directed, where advice and direction could be safely given; and, although they wisely abstained 'from controlling any measures which the exigency of circumstances might have called for on the part of the council, they communicated their sentiments and wishes thereon to their servants.'" The course taken by the directors in this last respect was the only rational one. The sphere of operation was too remote for a direct control; the only plan was to entrust their servants with a large discretion, and hold them personally responsible. M. Auber meets the allegation of Mill, that the directors were only at last roused to a sense of their danger to resort to some acts of authority by the hostilities against the nabob, the massacres of so many of their servants, and the extensive spirit of mutiny among their troops, in the following terms:—"The directors had exercised the acts of authority referred to before any such news had reached England. The death of Mr. Amyatt was not known to the court until three weeks after he had been removed from the service; the account of the massacre did not arrive until three months, and that of the mutiny until six months, after the appointment of Lord Clive; and, instead

\* *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. iv. pp. 129, 130.



of its having been considered an extensive mutiny, the court of directors, on the 11th of October, 1764, caused the following notice to be issued through the daily papers: 'We can, with good authority, assure the public, that although by the last advices from Bengal (7th February), the East India Company were informed there had been a mutiny among the troops, instigated and encouraged by some French soldiers, about one hundred and fifty in number, who had enlisted in the company's service, yet the same, at the time of dispatching those advices, was quelled, without the loss or desertion of a single European, except those Frenchmen above-mentioned.'" M. Auber also remarks:—"The appointment of Lord Clive was that of the court of proprietors, and not of the court of directors. With regard to the high powers stated to have been 'demanded,' it would be inferred from the statement that they formed one of the stipulations under which his lordship accepted the office of president; whereas he was sworn in on the 30th of April, and it was not until the 25th of May that the recommendation of the committee of correspondence which was agreed to in personal communication with, and not in consequence of any demand from his lordship, was adopted by the majority of the court. It was on that occasion that the eleven directors dissented, not from his appointment, but from the resolution conferring such powers on the select committee, which was to consist of four members besides his lordship; and so far from the act conferring such powers being unusual, the principle had obtained of appointing a select committee to act irrespective of the council, since February, 1756. In the instance of the expedition to Madras, under Colonel Forde, in 1758, the select committee acted under such powers, as appears by the consultations of the 21st of August in that year. In the instance of Mr. Vansittart, in February, 1764, only three months preceding the proposition for conferring the powers in question on Lord Clive, and the committee, full powers had been given by the court to Mr. Vansittart, 'with authority to pursue whatever means he judged most proper to attain the object. He was in all cases, where it could be done conveniently, to consult the council at large, or, at least, the select committee, though the power of determining was vested in him alone!'"

While Clive was engaged in Bengal, the company at home was much chagrined and scandalized by the communications which he made of the corruption of the court of Bengal. It is much to be wished that the conduct of the company to Clive himself in pecuniary matters had been as honourable as it was

upon receipt of his communications, and as they insisted the conduct of their councils ought to be in their dealings with native peoples and princes. The subject of presents from native princes to the servants of the East India Company, upon any revolution or great political change, was a difficult subject to adjust. Mr. Mill, in his history, places the lists of recipients before his readers, and shows the aggregate amount which in less than ten years, as was proved before a committee of the House of Commons, was received. This list, with the prefatory remarks of Mr. Mill, will interest our readers:—

"The practice which prevails in all rude governments of accompanying an application to a man in power with a gratification to some of his ruling passions, most frequently to the steadiest of all his passions, his avarice or rapacity, has always remarkably distinguished the governments in the East, and hardly any to so extraordinary a degree as the governments of the very rude people of India. When the English suddenly acquired their extraordinary power in Bengal, the current of presents, so well accustomed to take its course in the channel drawn by hope and fear, flowed very naturally, and very copiously, into the lap of the strangers. A person in India who had favours to ask, or evil to deprecate, could not easily believe, till acceptance of his present, that the great man to whom he addressed himself was not his foe. Besides the sums, which we may suppose it to have been in the power of the receivers to conceal, and of the amount of which it is not easy to form a conjecture, the following were detected and disclosed by the committee of the House of Commons, in 1773:—

*"Account of such sums as have been proved or acknowledged before the committee to have been distributed by the princes and other natives of Bengal, from the year 1757 to the year 1766, both inclusive; distinguishing the principal times of the said distributions, and specifying the sums received by each person respectively."*

Revolution in favour of Meer Jaffier, in 1757.			
	Rupees.	Rupees.	£
Mr. Drake (Governor) .		280,000	31,500
Colonel Clive as second in the select committee	280,000		
Ditto as commander-in- chief . . . . .	200,000		
Ditto as a private dona- tion . . . . .	1,600,000*		
		2,080,000	234,000

\* It appears, by the extract in the appendix, No. 102, from the evidence given on the trial of Ram Churn before the governor and council in 1761, by Roy Dulip, who had the principal management in the distribution of the treasures of the deceased nabob, Suraj-ad-Dowlah, upon the accession of Jaffier Ali Cawn—that Roy Dulip then



	Rupees.	Rupees.	£
Mr. Watts as a member of the committee . .	240,000		
Ditto as a private donation . . . . .	800,000		
	1,040,000		117,000
Major Kilpatrick . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Ditto as a private donation . .	300,000		33,750
Mr. Maningham . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Mr. Becher . . . . .	240,000		27,000
Six members of council ouc lac each . . . . .	600,000		68,200
Mr. Walsh . . . . .	500,000		56,250
Mr. Scrafton . . . . .	200,000		22,500
Mr. Lushington . . . . .	50,000		5,625
Stipulation to the navy and army			600,000

	1,261,075
Memorandum.—The sum of two lacs to Lord Clive, as commander-in-chief, must be deducted from this account, it being included in the donation to the army . . . . .	22,500
Lord Clive's jaghire was likewise obtained at this period*	
	1,238,575

Revolution in favour of Cossim, 1760.	
Mr. Sumner . . . . .	28,000
Mr. Holwell . . . . .	270,000
Mr. M'Guire . . . . .	180,000
Mr. Smyth . . . . .	134,000
Major Yorke . . . . .	134,000
General Calliaud . . . . .	200,000
Mr. Vansittart, 1762, received seven lacs; but the two lacs to General Calliaud are included; so that only five lacs must be counted for here . . . . .	500,000
Mr. M'Guire 5000 gold mohrs . .	75,000
	200,269

Revolution in favour of Jaffier, 1763.	
Stipulation to the army . . . .	2,500,000
Ditto to the navy . . . . .	1,250,000
	437,499
Major Monro† in 1764 received from Bulwan Singh . . . . .	10,000
Ditto from the nabob . . . . .	3,000
The officers belonging to Major Monro's family from ditto . .	3,000
The army received from the merchants at Benares . . . . .	400,000
	62,666

Nujum-ad-Dowlah's accession, 1765.	
Mr. Spencer . . . . .	200,000
Messieurs Pleydell, Burdett, and Gray, one lac each . . . . .	300,000
	35,000
received, as a present from Colonel Clive, one lac, 25,000 rupces, being five per cent. on 25 lacs. It does not appear that this evidence was taken on oath.	
* This, as noticed by Sir J. Malcolm, <i>Life of Clive</i> , vol. ii. p. 187, is incorrect. The jaghire was not granted till the end of 1759, two years after Meer Jaffier had been seated on the throne.	
† It appears Colonel Monro accepted a jaghire from the king of £12,500 a year, which he delivered to the Nabob Meer Jaffier, the circumstances of which are stated in the Journals of the year 1825.	

	Rupees.	£
Mr. Johnstone . . . . .	237,000	27,650
Mr. Leycester . . . . .	112,500	13,125
Mr. Senior . . . . .	172,500	20,125
Mr. Middleton . . . . .	122,500	14,291
Mr. Gideon Johnstoue . . . . .	50,000	5,833
		*139,357
General Carnac received from Bulwan Sing in 1765 . . . . .	80,000	9,333
Ditto from the king . . . . .	200,000	23,333
Lord Clive received from the Begum in 1766 . . . . .	500,000	58,333
		90,999

Restitution—Jaffier, 1757.	
East India Company . . . . .	1,200,000
Europeans . . . . .	600,000
Natives . . . . .	250,000
Armenians . . . . .	100,000
	2,150,000

Cossim, 1760.	
East India Company . . . . .	62,500

Jaffier, 1763.	
East India Company . . . . .	375,000
Europeans, Natives, &c. . . . .	600,000
	975,000

Peace with Sujah-ad-Dowlah.	
East India Company . . . . .	5,000,000
Total of presents, £2,169,665.	
Restitution, &c, £3,770,833.	
Total amount, exclusive of Lord Clive's jaghire . . . . .	£5,940,498

Memorandum.—The rupees are valued according to the rate of exchange of the company's bills at the different periods."

Mr. Mill wisely and eloquently remarks upon these facts—"That this was a practice presenting the strongest demand for effectual regulation, its obvious consequences render manifest and indisputable. In the first place, it laid the nabobs, rulers, and other leading men of the country, under endless and unlimited oppression; because, so long as they on whom their whole power and influence depended were pleased to desire presents, nothing could be withheld which they either possessed or had it in their power to ravage

\* These sums appear by evidence to have been received by the parties; but the committee think proper to state that Mohammed Reza Cawn intended a present of one lac of rupees to each of the four deputies sent to treat with Nujum-ad-Dowlah upon his father's death; viz. Messrs. Johnstone, Leycester, Senior, and Middleton; bnt Mr. Middleton and Mr. Leycester affirm that they never accepted theirs, and Mr. Johnstone appears to have tendered his back to Mohammed Reza Cawn, who would not accept them. These bills (except Mr. Senior's for 50,000 rupees) appear to have been afterwards laid before the select committee, and no further evidence has been produced to your committee concerning them. Mr. Senior received 50,000 rupees of his, and it is stated against him in this account.

† *Third Report on the Nature, State, and Condition of the East India Company, 1772, pp. 20—23.*



and extort. That the temptations under which the servants of the company were placed, carried them to those heights of exaction which were within their reach, is far from true. They showed, on the contrary, a reserve and forbearance, which the education received in no other country, probably in the world, except their own, could have enabled men in their extraordinary circumstances to maintain."

On the 17th of July, 1767, Lord Clive presented himself before the court of directors, upon his return from Bengal, after his brief but successful career there. The court congratulated him in terms of energetic praise, declaring that his conduct "exceeded the court's most sanguine expectations, not only in the very eminent services he had rendered the company by his wise and judicious administration of their affairs during his residence in Bengal, but also by that prudent and well-formed plan which he had suggested for the regulation of the plan of the select committee; and that it was impossible by force of words to represent to his lordship the high sense of gratitude the court entertained for the constant attention given by his lordship to the company's interests."

"On the 23rd of September, the general court, in consideration of the important services rendered to the company by Lord Clive, recommended to, and authorized, the court of directors to make a grant, under the company's seal, to his lordship and his personal representatives, of a further term of ten years on his jaghire. The indenture granting the same was approved and engrossed in October following."

The court of directors were probably well pleased with their judgment upon Clive's services, upon receiving a despatch from the council of Bengal, conveying a good account of the company's prospects, and attributing it to the genius of Clive. The council must have been much impressed with the overwhelming ability of the great general and statesman, when, in spite of his reforms, and resolute and even haughty conduct to themselves, they could make up their minds to lavish compliments upon him in this fashion:—

"We should be wanting in the just praises of superior merit, and in gratitude for the essential services performed by Lord Clive, if we failed to acknowledge that, to the prudence and vigour of his administration, you are chiefly to ascribe the present flourishing condition of your affairs. Firm and indefatigable in his pursuits, he joined, to the weight of personal character, a zeal for your service, and a knowledge of your interests, which could not but insure success.

"We beheld a presidency divided, headstrong and licentious; a government without nerves; a treasury without money, and a service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit. We may add that, amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and his helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty, and oppression.

"Such was the condition of this presidency and of these provinces. Your present situation need not be described. The liberal supplies to China; the state of your treasury, of your investment, of the service, and of the whole country, declare it to be the strongest contrast to what it was.

"We repeat," added the committee, "what we have already declared to Lord Clive, that no motive, no consideration, shall ever induce us to depart from that system of politics which has been recommended to us by precept and example, unless some very extraordinary event and unforeseen change should occur in the posture of your affairs."

On the 6th of April, 1770, the committee of the military fund carried into effect an agreement between Lord Clive and the company, in respect to the legacy left to his lordship by Meer Jaffier, referred to in a previous chapter. This sum amounted to £62,833. Meer Jaffier's successor added to this sum £37,700. There was also an additional sum of £24,128, due by the company for interest at eight per cent. on those amounts. Mr. Mill sneeringly observes that "to this ambiguous transaction the institution at Poplar owes its foundation." This is one of the many errors into which that able man was betrayed by the animus which he cherished towards the company. The institution at Poplar, under the designation of "Poplar Hospital," was founded for the relief of those who had belonged to the company's maritime service, or who might at any future time have belonged to it. Lord Clive's fund was for the benefit of those who had been in the military service, or who, in after times, might have served in the company's army. Poplar Hospital was instituted nearly a century before Clive was born, in 1627.

The conquests of Hyder Ali, which occasioned such tumults and alarms in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras, excited great concern in the court of directors. The following despatch to the council of Madras sets the affairs between Hyder, the Nabob of the Carnatic, and the Madras council, in their true light, and proves that the directors clearly understood how so many dangers and dis-



tresses were brought about, notwithstanding the advantageous light in which the council placed their own conduct, and their petulant accusations against the nabob, and every one else whom their own ignorance, incapacity, and apathy involved in their abortive projects and disputes. The date of the despatch was March, 1770 :—

“In your letter to the nabob, dated the 16th July, 1767, you say that it has been your intention, ever since 1761, to embrace the first favourable opportunity of securing the several passes into the Carnatic. That you then had a favourable opportunity, because the Mahrattas had already struck a terror into Hyder's forces; therefore, you urged the nabob to exert his utmost to get this accomplished. You afterwards promised him the government of the Mysore country. Your field deputies pompously appointed him fougedar thereof; and then you accuse him of having an insatiable desire of extending his dominions. He finds himself, by following your advice, reduced, disappointed, and almost despised; and then you blame him for want of temper.

“You have attempted to explain away the value of almost everything for which you have ventured to plunge us into a war with a view to obtain. To such a degree of irresolution and disability had your ill-conduct of the war reduced you, that necessity obliged you, at last, to give Mr. Andrews, in his instructions to treat with Hyder, a very extraordinary *carte blanche*, nearly to this effect: ‘If Hyder will not relinquish places taken, we must relinquish pretensions thereto.’

“You say the nabob has the Bengal transactions always in his mind :—we wonder not at it. You have, contrary to our express injunctions, afforded but too much reason for all the country powers around you to suspect us of encroaching designs against their possessions and tranquillity, and gained no one advantage thereby.

“In the first article of your treaty with Hyder, you include, in general words, all the friends and allies of the contracting parties, ‘provided they do not become aggressors;’ but if they become aggressors, they lose the benefit of such treaty.

“Now, as by the treaty with the soubahdar, Bazalet Jung is prohibited expressly, at any time, from yielding Hyder the common formal civilities necessarily practised by country powers who are at peace with each other, we cannot conceive how Bazalet Jung can fulfil the condition by which he holds his circar, and yet continue on good terms with Hyder, as all our allies must do, if they act conformably to the first article of your treaty with him.

“By your letter to the president and council of Bengal, 21st March last, and their reply thereto, of the 31st of the same month, we find a plan has been concerted between you, for establishing a fund for military resources, by a reduction of the investments on which we had so much reason to depend. However salutary it might be to provide against future exigencies, after your investments shall have been carried to their full extent, yet it is with the utmost astonishment we see that our servants (apprised, as they are, of the obligation the company is under to pay £400,000 annually to government, exclusive of the indemnity for tea, which may be estimated at near £200,000) could entertain an idea of depriving us of the only means we could have to discharge the same, together with such dividends as the proprietors might reasonably expect from our late acquisitions, and at the same time enable us to provide for the payment of bills of exchange, or our common and necessary consignments, and the other important occasions which must indispensably be complied with.”

The reference made in the foregoing despatch to the annual payment of £400,000 a year to the British government arose from an act passed to that effect in June, 1757, compelling the company to pay that sum for permission to hold the sovereignty of their territorial possessions in India for two years. This was another instance of the flagrant manner in which the crown and parliament were ever ready to rend from the company money on any pretext. After the resources of the company had been drained in formidable wars, and territory was conceded to them, by the revenues of which they hoped to cover the expenses incurred, the crown and parliament were ready to seize as much of these revenues as possible, leaving the company to meet its onerous pecuniary obligations as best it could. The government and parliament found an opportunity for enacting this piece of rapacity, in consequence of the turbulent proceedings of the proprietors of Indian stock, who looked for the most exorbitant dividends, under allegations of the wealth of their newly-acquired provinces, which raised the envy and cupidity of the governing classes in England. They at once proclaimed that subjects should not become territorial lords, or make conquests, except for the weal of the entire nation. The company protested that some of these cessions were in payment of expenses actually incurred, and that for most, if not all, of their accessions of land they paid a rent, and, in many cases, equal to that upon which zemindars and polygars held their tenures, and far



more surely paid. The legislature cared for none of these arguments, nor for any representations that might be made, the object of its members being to relieve themselves from taxation, and place money at the disposal of government, for its own purposes, however unjustly taken from the company. The king of England and his ministers were as ready as the Emperor of Delhi, his soubahdars, and their nabobs to seize what might, under their especial circumstances, be taken. The Mahratta chiefs were not the only royal personages who took "chout" from the Indian lands. The East India Company had to pay a "chout" to the Mahrattas of their own legislature upon the lands from which they hoped to acquire a revenue. The Act compelling the company to pay £400,000 a year expired in 1769, but was then renewed\* for five years. The act in 1767, besides exacting the tribute, compelled the company, whether it suited their business or not, to export a given value in British produce.

Closely following the renewal of the tribute act, government passed measures giving to their admirals on the coasts of India extraordinary powers, which were used stupidly and obstinately, as the reader has seen in the relation of the absurd interference of Admirals Lindsey and Harland in affairs for which they had neither intelligence, experience, nor capacity. Three commissioners sent out by the company in 1769 never reached their destination. This was one cause of the assumption of absolute supervision by the admirals, whose powers would have been held in check by the authority conferred on the commissioners with the consent of the crown.

In 1772 the directors were obliged to represent to the ministers that, in consequence of the imperfect power allowed to the company for the punishment of its servants, the directors were unable to enforce their authority; that the recent wars, which they neither desired nor occasioned, had absorbed their revenue; that the expenditure for troops and stores had increased; and that the investment upon the "out-tun," upon which they relied for means to meet their expenses, was actually suspended, from the absorption of their capital. It might have been expected that the ruinous tribute of £400,000 a year would, under such circumstances, have been remitted; but the minister of the day showed no disposition to relax demands, or in any way favour the company. The directors and proprietors did not themselves adopt prudent courses. They had not long before declared a dividend of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., with the full knowledge of their embarrassments; but

\* 7 Geo. III. cap. 57.

the £400,000 demanded by government was not paid. A public opinion was rapidly created against the company and its servants. Forgotten matters were sought out, refuted accusations were revived, sins forgiven or passed lightly over by the public, were dragged to light again; "returned Indians" were ridiculed in the newspaper and comic press, caricatures of those persons as "nabobs" were exhibited in the printshops, while eager crowds approvingly gazed upon them; and, in fine, a widespread hostility existed towards the directors and their agents. Had the company paid its way and made good dividends, had new accounts of glorious victories, instead of the intelligence concerning the defeats and disgraces attending the war with Mysore arrived, the mob would have cheered, the nation would have been proud of its heroes, the company's nabobs and the holders of East India stock would have been the most respectable of citizens. A cloud came upon the face of the great luminary, and every vulgar eye looked fearlessly upon it. The very persons that had courted the patronage of the company only a short time before, when in the heyday of its power, were amongst the pamphleteers and accusers who detracted its fair and legitimate fame. Lord Clive, instead of being a popular idol, became a popular victim. The families of those whom he had deprived of place and power, when in 1765 he uprooted so many maladministrators, as well as so much maladministration, had hated him from that time, and virulently calumniated him; but the public mind was not then prepared to listen to them: now it was ready to believe as well as to hear every fiction, as well as every fault which flowed from the tongues of his vituperators. The circumstances under which his lordship had entered upon that arduous trust were forgotten, whilst the most distorted views were given of his measures. Lord Clive was not a recognised servant of the state; he derived no authority from law: he was placed over a presidency, divided, headstrong, and licentious; the treasury was without money, and the service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit: the subordinate functionaries being aware that they were only amenable to punishment within the precincts of the Mahratta ditch. Such a state of things was alone to be met and overcome by the firm and resolute line of conduct which his lordship adopted. The effect on the interests of the individuals who suffered under the well-merited rebuke their conduct had drawn upon them led to the strong opposition evinced at the time towards his lordship,—a feeling which was fomented by some of the leading members of



the direction, who were personally indisposed towards him.\*

A select and a secret committee were moved for in parliament. The members were generally adverse to the company, and many were envious of the reputations and fortunes which had been made in India, by which persons originally obscure towered above "old families." They were denounced in and out of parliament as upstarts, as if it were criminal of them to be either braver, wiser, or more clever than the gentry at home. Those who had grown rich by legitimate means were the objects of as much acrimonious jealousy as those who brought home their stores of plunder; nor were the former free from calumny, any more than the latter from just censure. As many who had grown rich in India did so by plundering their own employers as well as vanquished princes and peoples—men who had dared nothing, and done nothing for the good of the company or the honour of their country, and as these were a vast majority of all that had grown rich in India, the "wealthy Indians" were as a class liable to suspicion and exposed to abuse. A perfect hurricane of obloquy and invective raged round the heads of all connected with the East India Company. How strange the fortunes of this anomalous society—one year the pride of an empire, and conquering empires, its servants statesmen and generals, whose names filled the world; in another year, not remote, none so poor as to do it homage. Its fortunes were like flashing meteors, attracting every eye, and passing swiftly on into darkness. Fitful and glorious were the episodes of its progress. Every season of renown was followed by one of obloquy. Now gorgeous Eastern kings poured forth their treasures before it, as offerings to its valour, wisdom, and power. Anon, the street-rabble mock its directors as they pass; and the most stupid country gentlemen that ever slumbered and voted upon the benches of the Commons deem themselves of too much consequence to associate with its returned ministers and soldiers, men who had

"Made the earth to tremble,  
And did shake kingdoms."

The general feeling against the company and its servants was promoted by an event in which they had no share, except as sufferers. In the year 1770 the rains failed in Bengal. Upon them depended the rice crops—upon these the sustenance of thirty millions of human beings. A famine ensued, such as often was known in India, especially in the rice

\* Auber's *Rise and Progress of the East India Company*, vol. i. p. 338.

districts. The loss of human life was terrible. The Ganges rolled down day by day numbers of dead bodies—they had perished of hunger. Nothing excites so much sympathy in England as a famine. Englishmen hear of desolating wars with an excitement which, in admiration of the results, and of the feats performed, counteracts the disgust which bloodshed would otherwise create. But in a famine there is no room for any emotions but pity and horror, unless where human instrumentalities are engaged in producing the ruin, and then the English character fires up in rage against the oppressors. This was the case at the period of which these pages treat. The tidings of famine and death from India exasperated the multitude. It was believed that the company's agents had hoarded and forestalled the rice, and in their eagerness for gain, allowed multitudes of their fellow-creatures to starve. Commensurate efforts to disabuse the public mind were not made; and perhaps no efforts would have been successful in correcting the prejudice which was greedily received. As Macaulay wrote, "These unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. None of his acts had the smallest tendency to produce such a calamity. If the servants of the company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and while in power had resolutely enforced. But in the eyes of his countrymen he was *the nabob*—the Anglo-Indian character personified; and while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for the effects of a dry season in Bengal." Clive, as the writer last quoted also remarked, "Had to bear the double odium of his bad and his good actions, of every Indian abuse, and of every Indian reform." Clive had himself a seat in parliament; his enemies desired to have a sentence of expulsion passed upon him; they sought the confiscation of his estates, and demanded that he should be deprived of his rank in the army. Clive's conduct in the house was as intrepid as in the field. He astonished even the great Chatham by his clear statements, lucid arrangements, sound argument, manly eloquence, and bold, defiant declamation. He bore himself as haughtily and bravely to the senate of England as to the corrupt council of Calcutta, or before the throne of the Mogul. As soon as his fortunes were on the wane, nearly all his professed friends, and even those whom he had loaded with benefits, forsook him. It was the common belief that all his property would be seized, and his person incarcerated, after being stripped of all his well-won honours. Men supposed that nothing would remain to him but his genius and his



glory; and with these his former parasites, acquaintances, and colleagues had least sympathy. They thought more of his palace in Shropshire, his splendid mansion at Claremont, his seat in parliament, and his title, than of the renown of Arcot and Plassey, the conquest, salvation, and effective administration of an empire.

The committees examined and cross-examined him. Frank, manly, great in his humiliation as when he gave law to India, he met all inquiries with openness and truth. He justified acts for which he has been since generally condemned by writers who feared to encounter public opinion in our own times by defending him, but who were by no means certain that his conduct deserved denunciation. Some of the worst acts attributed to him were performed under circumstances which open up questions of the nicest casuistry, and such as no man of honour and virtue, who was enlightened and experienced, would hastily decide. The committee did not conclude its inquiries the first session, but in the next having still further prosecuted them, it came to a conclusion. Before the verdict was announced, it was made apparent to all, and to the horror of those whom Lord Macaulay justly calls "the low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down, and were eager to worry him to death," that Clive had found one faithful and sympathising friend—his king. George III., who, with all his faults, had such signal virtues, determined to stand by his loyal and magnanimous, even if erring, servant. While yet they were questioning and cross-questioning him, the king had him installed in the Order of the Bath, with great pomp, in the chapel of Henry the Seventh. He had been before elected to this dignity, but the king chose the occasion of his persecution thus to honour him. Shortly afterwards he made him lord-lieutenant of Shropshire; and when, kissing his majesty's hand upon occasion of his appointment, he ventured to refer to his dangers and services and sufferings, the king betrayed much emotion. His majesty gave him a private audience, and took occasion to converse intimately with him on Indian topics.

Notwithstanding the king's favour, and the transparent corruption of his accusers, Burgoyne, the chairman of the committee, became his accuser before the house. Lord Macaulay gives this man too much credit for both his parts and his honour. Clive found another friend; Wedderburn, the attorney-general, eloquently and ably defended him. Clive replied to Burgoyne and his other assailants with courage and dignity, but there was a tone of plaintiveness in his address never be-

fore known as he recounted his wrongs and his sorrows: it was the first echo of a breaking heart. The concluding paragraph of his address was striking, in which he reminded them that not only his honour, but their own, was to be decided. He then left the house.

The Commons passed a series of resolutions, several of which related to Clive personally. The first declared that he had, when in command of the troops in India, received large sums of money from Meer Jaffier. The house would not affirm Burgoyne's eagerly-pressed conclusion, that they were received corruptly. A substantial motion was then made, that Clive had abused the power he possessed, and set a bad example to the public servants; the "previous question" was put and carried, the house thus refusing to entertain the question at all. Wedderburn adroitly took advantage of the temper of the house, and moved that Lord Clive had rendered great and meritorious services to his country. This was hotly debated. The truth of the proposition was evident, but if carried, Clive would go forth more triumphant than ever. It was tantamount to a vote of thanks of the house. His enemies struggled fiercely against it, speaking against time, and endeavouring to weaken the numbers on his side by exhaustion. The night wore away, and when the morning shone clear and bright upon St. Stephen's, Clive's antagonists conceiving that there was too much patriotism in the Commons of England to refuse a great man so just a tribute, shrank from a decision, and the resolution was carried *nemine contradicente*. This was a terrible blow for Clive's enemies out of doors, and especially among the corrupt, cowardly, and envious clique within the circle of the directors themselves.

Clive's success brought crowds of flatterers around him, who had forsaken him when the thunder-cloud was yet dark above his head, and seemed ready to discharge its bolts upon him. He was no longer deserted. He sought the society of a few attached friends, he basked in royal favour, he surrounded himself by luxury; but, amidst all, he pined—his heart was broken. The king and the senate of his country had stood by him, but the ignorant masses were prejudiced, and regarded him with superstitious horror; the venal among the proprietary of India stock and their friends kept up an incessant attack upon him still. The company, whose favour he had fought and lived for, and for which he had conquered kingdoms, looked coldly on him; and his sensitive heart soon sank into a depression deeper than death, and from which he sinfully sought death as a relief. On the 22nd of November, 1774, he committed suicide, having just



arrived at the age of forty-nine. His enemies trod upon his ashes, chased his memory through every avenue of the past, vituperated the dead. His country slowly came to a juster appreciation of his errors and of his sins, of his greatness and of his glory.

The proceedings of the Commons in connection with the inquiry which secured Clive from the power of his enemies were harsh and stern to the company. A resolution was passed that all territory won by the arms of the state belonged to the state, and that the East India Company had violated that principle. The company had but little aid from the state in its acquisitions, and paid for that aid vastly more than its value. The principal issue of the inquiry was "the regulation act."\* This act increased the value of the qualification demanded from a director, prescribed a new oath, and made various regulations of a purely administrative nature in connection with the directory. It decreed that Bengal should be governed by a governor-general and four councillors, each to continue in office for five years. The presidencies of Madras and Bombay were to obey the government of Bengal. The directors were to send to the secretaries of state copies of all advices, but no control was to be exercised by the ministry.

Warren Hastings was nominated in the act itself as the first governor-general of India. Lieutenant-general Clavering, the Honourable George Monson, Richard Barwell, and Philip Francis, Esqrs., the first members of the supreme council. A supreme court of judicature was to be established at Calcutta. The company's monopoly was made more stringent than ever. Another act\* granted the company £1,400,000 on loan for their relief. The nation was to forego for a time all participation in territorial profits. The dividend to proprietors was fixed at six per cent. The amount of merchandise in English commodities to be annually exported by the company should be to the value of £380,837. The crown was to appoint officers to conduct the civil and military affairs. The company objected to most of these provisions, and the court of proprietors refused to recognise the appointment by the crown of General Clavering to command their forces. Ultimately they gave way. The members of the supreme council, Sir Elijah Impey, the new chief justice, and various other persons of distinction embarked at St. Helen's on the 1st of April, 1774, and from this period commenced a new phase of the existence of the East India Company.

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

AFFAIRS IN BENGAL DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS—TERRITORY WRESTED FROM THE MOGUL AND GIVEN TO THE NABOB OF OUDE—ALLIANCE WITH THE NABOB FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE ROHILLAS—EXECUTION OF NUNDCOOMAR—VAST SUMS OBTAINED BY HASTINGS FOR THE COMPANY FROM THE NATIVE PRINCES.

It is important to glance at the relations of the British to surrounding powers, and of those powers to one another, at the period when the government of Bengal, and by consequence the government of India, devolved upon Warren Hastings.

The emperor's government was in a very feeble condition. He had been for a number of years dependent by turns upon the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and the English. Even the nizam of the Deccan and the soubahdar of Bengal were not too feeble to give him uneasiness or offer affront to his authority. The major part of the princes of India had shaken off the imperial authority. Vassals, or officials of the supreme power, took advantage of the general decay of the Mogul power to exalt themselves by force or fraud. Mahrattas, Sikhs, Affghans, and the stronger and richer of the nabobs constantly menaced

the territories that surrounded them, over which they had themselves usurped the authority which belonged legitimately to the Delhi emperor. With such a state of affairs around them, it required on the part of the English a constant vigilance, and they were as anxious to maintain the balance of power in Hindostan as the English at home were solicitous to maintain it in Europe. It has become the custom among politicians of a certain school in recent times to deride this principle, but it is founded in the nature of things, for if any one state gains a preponderance of power by attacking weaker states in detail, the independence of all will be infallibly destroyed. It is therefore the interest of every other power to limit that which to the desire of encroachment adds the power of effecting it, unless checked by a combination of all or some of the governments,

\* 13 Geo. III. cap. 16.

\* 13 Geo. III. cap. 94.



which believe themselves endangered. The wars of the English in India had hitherto arisen mainly from the necessity of preventing any other power, native or European, from becoming so strong that the existence of the English in India would be at its mercy. When in April, 1772, Hastings became the successor of Mr. Cartier, as governor of Bengal, and virtually the governor of India, he saw around the British territory, and bordering upon those states which were contiguous to it, states and peoples who were desirous of maintaining a constant warfare, either to acquire territory or plunder. Some of the chiefs of those countries were ambitious of extended dominion, others only sought tribute or temporary spoil, while another class of chiefs were alike avaricious of immediate plunder and permanent occupation of territory. The court of directors considered Allahabad as the great central position from which, as from a watch-tower, the English could look down upon the greedy and restless powers that prowled around. From that position, support could be rendered to the emperor, so long as it suited English policy to pay respect to his nominal power, and, under its prestige, themselves exercise the reality. From Allahabad, the territories of Sujah-ad-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, and of the Mahrattas, Rohillas, and Jauts, could be observed. The directors had ordered the council at Bengal, previous to the arrival of Hastings, to maintain a strong brigade at what they deemed the key position of India.

The Nabob of Oude reigned on the north of the Ganges. If an enemy, he, from his position and resources, would prove a formidable one; if an ally, and under the influence of the company, they could by his means make themselves the umpires of Hindostan. They had laid that chief under great obligations, by restoring to him his dominions, when the right of conquest, always recognised in India, enabled them to deprive him of princely dignity and power. The Rohilla chiefs were numerous, but all held their sway in detached lands in the vicinity of the emperor and Sujah-ad-Dowlah, so as to be unable to make any movement separately, or combined without the knowledge of the king and his vizier. These Rohillas were wild chieftains, and when acting in unison could pour an army of eighty thousand men chiefly cavalry, upon any point in their vicinity. There was generally a good understanding between them and the Nabob of Oude, to whom they looked up as having a certain prescriptive authority even in Rohilcund. The Rohillas were among the best soldiers in India. As mere horsemen they

were not superior to the Mahrattas, who were probably the best light cavalry for marching and outpost duty in the world; but they were by far their superiors in close combat, being among the best swordsmen in India. The Rohillas were also famous for their use of rockets in war. The Jats, or Jauts, extended from Agra to within a few coss of Delhi. Their revenue was about two crores of rupees, and they held three forts which were deemed by other native powers impregnable. They were also reputed to have a splendidly-appointed and numerous artillery. The country of the Mahrajah Madhu lay south-west of Delhi. He ruled over various tribes, but his people were chiefly Rajpoots. These were proud of their lineage, as it was universally held that they were descended from kings, as their name of Rajpoots implied. They were considered the proudest and bravest warriors in India. They could not forage like the Mahrattas, they were not gigantic in stature like the Oudeans, they were not rocket-men like the Rohillas, nor artillerymen like the Jats, but they even surpassed the Rohillas as swordsmen, and were by all warriors of Hindostan accounted the bravest of the brave. It was reported that they never retreated in battle. In a war with the Jats, with whom they were often at war, their cavalry charged through the fire of ninety pieces of cannon, were thrice repulsed, each time only retiring to re-form, and at the fourth charge gained the victory. In stature they were rather below the middle size, but their persons were finely proportioned, and their countenances handsome and expressive of dignity and courage.

The Sikhs then held the lands from Sirhind to Attock, a country exceedingly fertile; they were rapidly rising to political importance, but the distance of their settlements caused them to be placed out of the computations of the English, when reckoning upon opposing or allied forces. As, however, these Sikhs soon rose to be an important power, their position at this juncture is noticed. They were brave, energetic, and industrious, in the opinion of the peoples of Northern and Western India. The Mahrattas, their power, position, and policy, have been so frequently the subjects of remark in foregoing pages, that it is only necessary to say here that of all the tribes of India they were the most likely to give the English trouble, excepting, perhaps, the Mysoreans, whose importance chiefly depended upon the skill and genius of their chief. They were of kindred race with the Mahrattas, inhabiting contiguous territory, and of similar habits, military and social. The policy recommended by the court of directors was for their governors and coun-



cils to be on friendly terms and commercial intercourse with all these nations, to avoid the encumbrance of alliances with them, either offensive or defensive, especially the former, but not to allow any of them to obtain so overwhelming a preponderance by the conquest of the rest as to become too formidable to the English. This policy was not carried out intelligently and prudently by the councils of presidencies up to the time of Hastings. How far it was then observed will be seen from future pages.

"When Warren Hastings took his seat at the head of the council board, Bengal was governed according to the system which Clive had devised—a system which was perhaps skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the company, and was in truth the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless. But though thus absolute in reality, the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territory as vassals of the throne of Delhi, they raised their revenue as collectors appointed by the imperial commission; their public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles, and their mint struck only the imperial coin. There was still a Nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he had less share than the youngest writer or cadet in the company's service. The English council which represented the company at Calcutta was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present, the governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries, or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous wish of those who sit with him in council. They are indeed entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England. But it is with the governor that the supreme power resides, and on him

that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be on the whole the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a reproductive constitution. In the time of Hastings, the governor had only one vote in council, and in case of an equal division, a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently that he was overruled on the gravest questions, and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded for years together from the real direction of public affairs. The English functionaries at Fort William had yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiation with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the civil servant still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word 'political' as synonymous with 'diplomatic.' We could name a gentleman still living who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business. The internal government of Bengal the English rulers delegated to a great native minister who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and with the exception of what pertains to ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near £100,000 sterling a year. The personal allowance of the nabob amounted to near £300,000 a year, passed through the minister's hand, and was to a great extent at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of this immense power he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country."\*

The first business of importance which devolved upon Hastings was in connection with certain instructions of the court sent out by them in August, 1771, and which arrived only ten days after he succeeded to the chair. These instructions referred to Mohammed Reza Khan, who at that time administered the revenue affairs of the soubahdar, and in part of the British. When the infant brother of the former soubahdar came to the

\* Lord Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*,



musnid, Nundcoomar, the infamous Brahmin to whom reference was made when recording the events of Mr. Vansittart's government, was competitor for the post of chief minister with Mohammed Reza. The latter was preferred. The writer last quoted thus describes the result :—"Nundcoomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt the reputation of his successful rival. This was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal under the administration established by Clive did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the company, for at that time the most absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry, hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagodas and gold mohurs were measured out by the bushel, filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what was nevertheless the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor,—than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by lords of the treasury and members for the city, that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed, and the directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mohammed Reza Khan than to their own ignorance of the country entrusted to their care. They were confirmed in this by the agents of Nundcoomar, for Nundcoomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the court of directors, not to the council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mohammed Reza Khan, to arrest him with all his family, and all his partizans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole of the administration of the province. It was added that the governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nundcoomar in the investigation. The vices of Nundcoomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might at such a conjuncture be derived; and though he could not safely be trusted, it might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward. The governor bore no goodwill to Nundcoomar; many years before they had known each other at Moorshedabad, and then a quarrel had arisen between them, which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of un-

forgiving natures. To Mohammed Reza Khan, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless, he proceeded to execute the instructions of the company with an alacrity which he never showed, except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had wisely, as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the directors furnished him with the means for effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his council. He took his measures with his usual vigour and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mohammed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of sepoys. The minister was aroused from his slumber, and informed he was a prisoner. With the Mussulman's gravity he bent his head, and submitted to the will of God."

With Mohammed Reza another man of mark was arrested, Shitabroy, or Schitab Roy. His daring courage and skilful conduct at the battle of Patna, under Captain Knox, introduced him so favourably to the council of Bengal, that he had been appointed minister of revenue in Bahia, an office in reference to that province similar in character to that which was held by Mohammed Reza in reference to all the dominions of the soubahbar. This heroic and honest man was another object of hatred to the atrocious Nundcoomar, and also fell, so far, a victim to his wiles. The members of council knew nothing of these proceedings until the prisoners arrived in Calcutta, or, at all events, approached that city. Hastings acted with a secrecy and promptitude which by no means pleased the council. "The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. He was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the meantime the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice under English superintendence was established. The nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government, but he was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was entrusted to a lady of his father's harem, known by the name of the Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nundcoomar named Goordas. Nundcoomar's services were wanted, yet he could



not be safely trusted with power, and Hastings thought it a master stroke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent, by promoting the inoffensive son.

"The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late ministers with rigour. Their trial had been put off on various pleas, till the new organization was complete. They were then brought before a committee over which the governor presided. Shitabroy was speedily acquitted with honour. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels, and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered by confinement; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

"The innocence of Mohammed Reza Khan was not so clearly established. But the governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nundcoomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancour which distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charges had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty. Nundcoomar had purposed to destroy the Mussulman administration, and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool; had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle."\*

As soon as the intrigues, falsehoods, forgeries, bribes, and other villainies of Nundcoomar had triumphed, and the company had been so far imposed upon as to suspect, arrest, and incarcerate two honest men, Nundcoomar began a new series of infamous schemes. Although a cruel and heartless villain, he had a zeal for the Brahminical religion, and was desirous of uprooting the Mohammedan influence altogeth'er in the Bengal provinces.

He accordingly sent to his son, then occupying the chief place of ministerial influence in the court of the soubahdar, under the auspices of the English, letters which he desired to be copied by the Begum, the regent of the infant soubahdar, which were to be addressed as if from herself to the council of Bengal. These letters were complaints of infractions of treaty by the English, of encroachments upon the rights of the soubahdar, and containing demands for the removal of such encroachments, and the restoration of such rights. The object of Nundcoomar was to create such a feud as would rouse the English to destroy all the privileges and influence of the Mohammedan government. By this means he would humiliate a rival creed, and probably in the confusion which must ensue, he would acquire fresh wealth or power. At all events, he hoped for new modes of gratifying his horrid malignity against both the Mohammedans and the English. The governor discovered his intrigues, but knowing how extensive was the influence which this rich and ingenious Brahmin had gained at the India-house, Hastings thought it prudent to take no step until he had informed the directors. They, instead of ordering the arrest of Nundcoomar, made no reply for a long time, and then filled their communication with unmeaning platitudes, affecting to think Nundcoomar a very bad man, but not worse than most other natives. It is impossible to account for the way in which the influence of this bad Brahmin prevailed in London, except by supposing that he had gained partizans in very high quarters by the use of money in a way which disgraced the recipients: nothing could sink Nundcoomar himself into deeper infamy than he had already reached. One of the objects contemplated by Nundcoomar by his intrigues, both in India and in England, was the destruction of Mr. Hastings, who had foiled his wiles on a previous occasion. Hastings foresaw this, and warned the directors in his despatch that he could hope for no security, and Bengal for no quiet, while any heed was given to the representations of Nundcoomar, either concerning the council, the soubahdar, particular officers in the service of either, the politics of the native princes, or the condition of the country. While the governor's despatch was on its way, other events transpired of much importance in their influence upon the future.

The Mahrattas exercised a dangerous influence over the weak Mogul, and so active were their raids that they became the tormentors of all India. The vizier besought the aid of the English. The king summoned the vizier to Delhi; the latter, having no reliance upon the monarch's steadiness, and fearing that his

\* Macaulay's review of Gleig's *Life of Hastings*.



majesty would, perhaps, make over some of the Oude territory to the marauders, refused to go. The Mahrattas were preparing an invasion of Rohileund, which would bring them upon the confines of the nabob's own dominions, and endanger their independence. He also feared, or affected to fear, that the Rohillas, to save themselves, might unite with the Mahrattas against him. He resolved to open a negotiation with the Rohillas, and besought the English general at Allahabad, Sir Robert Barker, to accompany him. The council, hoping for peace through Barker's intervention, gave their consent. The main object of the nabob was, however, soon shown to be to extort some portion of Rohileund, and he hoped the presence of the English general would so alarm the chiefs as to cause them to accede to his wishes. They consented on condition that he would aid Zabita Khan, the Rohilla chief, then at Succurtaul, guarding the fords of the Ganges against the approach of the Mahrattas, who were assisted by the king, as the Mogul emperor was at this time most frequently called. While these negotiations went forward Madajee Scindiah, the Mahratta chief, forced the passage of the Ganges with bravery equal, and skill superior, to that displayed by the Rohillas. Zabita Khan fled; Scindiah pursued the flying Rohillas to the very heart of Rohileund. The vizier was obliged to open negotiations with the conquerors, and such were his fears that he would have submitted to the most abject terms but for the presence of General Barker. The mutinous disposition of the nabob's troops, partly from irregular pay, and partly from sympathy with whatever cause the Mogul espoused, unmanned the nabob. By the counsels of the English general, the nabob put his frontier in a good state of defence, while the general ordered the first brigade of the English army, then at Patna, to cross the Caramnassa, passing the bounds of the company's territories. The council were displeased because they had not been consulted, for which step there was no time, as the Mahrattas were quick of foot and hand. The council were also angry at the expense incurred without any agreement with the nabob to refund it.

The Mahrattas had no intention of waiting upon the slow movements of the English. They plundered Rohileund, and retired, as usual, laden with booty. The Rohilla chiefs had, on the whole, behaved badly, either surrendering to Scindiah, or seeking refuge in the north. They then entered into a convention with the nabob that, upon paying to him forty lacs of rupees, he would aid in defending their territory. The Mahrattas characteristically offered to him a portion of the

Rohilla lands nearest to his own, if he would only see that the chout, or tribute, was regularly paid to them. They announced, at the same time, their intention to appropriate to themselves lands formerly conceded by the Rohillas to the king. In fact, matters assumed the aspect of a convention between the vizier and the Mahrattas to partition Rohileund, each seizing a portion. The Mahrattas had at this time broken all their agreements with the king, and were rapidly despoiling him, while professing to uphold the dignity of his name. They had even forced from him a sumnid for the district of Meerut. The king endeavoured to betray them to the vizier and the English, and while doing so betrayed these to the very power from which he besought his old allies to save him. The Rohillas and the vizier made at last a defensive league. The Mahrattas no sooner heard of it than they marched against the confederates, making ruinous demands from Sujah-ad-Dowlah.

The vizier besought the company's interposition, and Hastings wrote to the Mahratta chiefs, showing them that they were making aggressions upon an ally. The first brigade of the British army advanced to the headquarters of the nabob. The king, who had confederated himself with the Mahrattas, now unaccountably opposed them, drew on a general battle, and, as every one concerned foresaw, incurred a total defeat. He was at the mercy of these banditti. The Mahrattas attacked the Jats next, who, being betrayed by an Englishman in their service, named Maddox, were as unsuccessful as the Rohillas had been. Colonel Champion and fresh forces joined the vizier, who undertook to defray their charges while employed in his defence. The Mahrattas had obtained grants of Corah and part of Allahabad from the vizier, under the menaces they held out. The English had conferred these districts upon him, they reoccupied them. It was now evident that the nabob's territory alone stood between the Mahrattas and the company's provinces, and that the time had arrived when some definite and permanent means for his defence against these marauders must be made. The nabob sought for an interview with Hastings, which he granted with the advice of the council. The council placed no restraint upon the liberty of the president as to his negotiations, except that Sujah-ad-Dowlah must bear the expenses of troops sent to defend him, and that as the king had committed himself as an instrument in the hands of the Mahrattas, their engagements with him should terminate. The council, however, would reopen with him fresh negotiations, upon new



conditions, one of which was that the tribute of twenty-six lacs of rupees from Bengal and Bahar should be surrendered.

Mr. Hastings, during his journey to Oude, requested the king to send some person to negotiate with him. He took no notice of the president's despatches, but sent menacing demands for the payment of his tribute, and subjection to his authority, which was nothing less than subjection to the Mahrattas. "Mr. Hastings reached Benares on the 19th of August, and, on the 7th of September, concluded a final treaty with the vizier, by which the districts of Corah and Allahabad were ceded to him, on condition of his paying fifty lacs of rupees to the company; twenty in ready money, and the remaining thirty lacs in two years, in two equal payments; and defraying the charges on account of any of the company's forces which he might require, the same being fixed at two lacs ten thousand per month for a brigade. The vizier, at the instance of Mr. Hastings, renewed with Cheyte Sing the engagements made with his father Bulwunt Sing, in 1764, excepting the additional tribute of two and a half lacs of rupees, to which Cheyte Sing had agreed on his accession to the Raj in 1770. Application was again made to the vizier for the dismissal of M. Gentil, although Mr. Hastings was of opinion that 'the man' had acquired importance from the notice taken of him, rather than from his real power to affect our interests. It was arranged that a resident should be appointed to the court of the vizier from the presidency. The vizier left Benares the 10th September, on which day Mr. Hastings departed for Chunar, where he fixed the boundary of the lands appertaining to the fort. He then proceeded to Patna, for the purpose of acquiring information respecting the saltpetre manufactories; and resumed his seat at the board on the 4th of October, when he submitted a detailed report of his proceedings, and adverted to what had passed between the vizier and himself, as to the appointment of a resident at the court of Oude from the governor in council."

The council were pleased with the arrangements, and empowered Mr. Hastings to appoint a resident at the court of Oude, to hold communications only with himself, and to be dismissed at his pleasure.

The English general, Sir Robert Barker, caused much trouble and anxiety to the governor and council, by making it a point of honour to resist all directions given him by civil servants. This conduct was unwarrantable, for, although the civil officers gave him directions what to do, they left it entirely to his own judgment as to the mode of performance.

When the Mahrattas were induced to withdraw from Rohilcund, it was upon condition that the Rohilla chiefs should pay by instalments forty lacs of rupees, and that the nabob guaranteed the payment. He did so upon receiving the bond of the chief sirdar, who was himself guaranteed by the confederated sirdars. They never paid their quota. The chief paid to the nabob five lacs instead of forty, and he paid none at all to the Mahrattas.

On the 18th of November, 1773, the council received a letter from the vizier, in which he complained of the non-payment by the Rohillas of the money for which he had given a guarantee to the Mahrattas, while the chiefs of Rohilcund were themselves invading the territories of the Mahrattas in the Doab, which would, of course, bring these marauders back again, to the danger of the nabob's own dominions, and with imperative demands for the payment of the forty lacs. The nabob's proposal, under these circumstances, was brief and pertinent:—"On condition of the entire expulsion of the Rohillas, I will pay to the company the sum of forty lacs of rupees in ready money, whenever I shall discharge the English troops; and until the expulsion of the Rohillas shall be effected, I will pay the expenses of the English troops; that is to say, I will pay them the sum of 2,10,000 monthly." This demand excited protracted discussions at Calcutta; but, at last, Colonel Champion's brigade was ordered to advance and assist the vizier. The policy of the council was, that it had become absolutely necessary to strengthen Oude, as a barrier against the Mahrattas, and that the Rohillas, fearing the vizier more than they did those more distant freebooters, would be more likely to join them in plundering his territory, to the danger of Bengal, and involving the English in expensive operations of defence.

Champion's army and that of the nabob encountered the Rohillas on the 22nd of April, 1774, when a sanguinary battle was fought. In personal appearance the people of Oude were then, as they are now, the finest and most soldier-like in India. Their average stature is far superior to that of the English, as well as of every other race in India to the frontier hills of Affghanistan. Their courage, however, never bore any proportion to their gigantic appearance—Rohillas, Rajpoots, Jats, and other races much lower in stature, having always proved superior to them in the field. Champion soon found that the Oudeans and their ruler were cowards together; they fled from the field, leaving the English to maintain unaided a conflict with desperate men in overwhelming numbers. Victory decided for



the English, chiefly through their artillery, the Rohillas again and again charging the guns with desperate valour, attacking the English on both flanks, which their superior numbers enabled them to do with prospect of advantage, while such a fire was directed upon the British front as might distract attention from the attacks upon the flanks. The chief sirdar, Hafiz Rhamet, was slain, also one of his sons, after behaving with magnanimous heroism. When the battle was over, the nabob and his cowardly followers appeared on the field, to plunder the fallen and assassinate the dying.

According to Mr. Mill, and Lord Macaulay, who follows Mr. Mill slavishly in his reviews of the memoirs of Clive and Hastings, the utmost cruelty was perpetrated upon the people of Rohilcund, and upon the family of the fallen chief. The statements of Mill appear to have been based upon the communications of Colonel Champion to the council. That gallant soldier, scorning the cowardly Oudeans, and admiring the chivalry of the Rohillas, was ready, without sufficient evidence, to make such representations as unauthenticated reports brought him. The council replied to his communications, directing him to protect the conquered, and calling for proofs of his allegations: these were never given. The statements of Mill, and the glowing pictures portrayed by Lord Macaulay, representing British troops as partaking of the cruelties perpetrated, or at least standing by reluctant witnesses of burning villages, plundered houses, and ravished women, are denied by writers far better acquainted with the history of the period than either Mr. Mill or his lordship. The former quotes Colonel Champion as stating in his despatches instances of cruelty and plunder witnessed by the whole army. The colonel, no doubt, did witness such acts, and would have witnessed many more, and worse in their character, if it were not for the moral pressure exercised by him against the vizier's misdeeds; but many of the colonel's statements were made upon hearsay, and were false. Mr. Hastings was denounced by Mill for justifying or palliating such deeds by the custom of oriental warfare, and the admission that even English armies in India had previously, in that very country, misconducted themselves in a manner similar to that of the vizier's army: yet these statements of Mr. Hastings were true, and the real explanation of what did occur, stripped of the false representations which Mill too readily credited, as did Colonel Champion himself. Professor Wilson's comment upon Mill's statements is as follows:—"The words 'extermination,' 'extirpation,' and the like,

although found in the correspondence, are here [in Mill] put forward so as to convey erroneous impressions. The only extirpation proposed was that of the power of one or two Rohilla chiefs. It was not a war against the people, but against a few military adventurers who had gained their possessions by the sword, who were constantly at war with their neighbours and with each other, and whose forcible suppression was the legitimate object of the King of Delhi or the Nabob of Oude. So far was the contest from being national, that the mass of the population of Rohilcund consisted of Hindoos, hostile both in religion and policy to their Affghan rulers, to whom the name Rohillas is somewhat incorrectly confined. Even amongst the Affghanr, however, there was but a partial combination, and several of the sirdars joined the vizier. One of the many pamphlets put forth by the virulent enemies of Hastings (*Origin and authentic Narrative of the present Mahratta and late Rohilla War*. Lond. 1781) unblushingly affirms that 500,000 families of husbandmen and artists had been driven across the Jumna, and that the Rohilla provinces were a barren and uninhabited waste. An equally false representation is cited from the Parliamentary Register, 1781, by Hamilton, according to whom the numbers expelled were about 17,000 or 18,000 men with their families, none being included in the spirit of the treaty, *excepting such as were actually found in arms*. The Hindoo inhabitants, consisting of about 700,000, were no otherwise affected by it than experiencing a change of masters, to which they had been frequently accustomed.\* These statements all proceeded from personal hostility to Hastings, and had no foundation in genuine humanity. It is evident that the son of Hafiz, although the most grievous consequence of hostilities was his father's death, entertains no suspicion that there was anything atrocious in the transaction, and he expresses no personal resentment towards the chief actors in the revolution."†

M. Auber‡ notices the allegations put forth by Mill, and repeated by Macaulay, in the following terms:—

"Accounts of severity of conduct, on the part of the vizier, towards the family of Hafiz Rhamet, reaching the council, they intimated to Colonel Champion that it had been an invariable maxim in the policy of the company's governments, in the execution of any enter-

\* Hamilton's *History of the Rohilla Affghans*, p. 268.

† Wilson's notes on Mill's *British India*, book v. chap. i. pp. 403, 404.

‡ Auber's *British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. vii. pp. 407—409.



prises undertaken in behalf of their allies, to interpose their protection in favour of the conquered princes, for the security of their lives and honour: that it was the intention of the council to adhere to a maxim which had so greatly contributed to the reputation of the British name, and to perform what might be incumbent on them on the occasion in question. They accordingly desired to be informed of the nature and instances of the ill-treatment alluded to, in order that they might judge of the measures proper to be adopted. In the interim, the commander-in-chief was to urge such remonstrances to the vizier as occasion might require; and to point out how entirely abhorrent the council were of every species of inhumanity. No instances were, however, adduced in proof of the allegations of cruelty, which appeared to have been made upon general rumour."

M. Auber adds, in reference to these transactions:—

"The vizier having intimated to Colonel Champion, in the month of May, that he had no further occasion for the services of the troops in the field before the rains, preparations were made to canton them at Bareilly. The whole of the country lately possessed by Hafiz Rhamet, with Ouly and Bessouly, belonging to the son of Dudney Cawn, had been acquired by the vizier."

The following was the letter of the council, making known these events to the directors:

"Every circumstance that could possibly favour this enterprise, by an uncommon combination of political considerations and fortuitous events, operated in support of the measure.

"1st. Justice to the vizier for the aggravated breach of treaty in the Rohilla chiefs.

"2nd. The honour of the company, pledged implicitly by General Barker's attestation for the accomplishment of this treaty, and which, added to their alliance with the vizier, engaged us to see redress obtained for the perfidy of the Rohillas.

"3rd. The completion of the line of defence of the vizier's dominions, by extending his boundary to the natural barrier formed by the northern chain of hills and the Ganges and their junction.

"4th. The acquisition of forty lacs of rupees to the company, and of so much specie added to the exhausted currency of these provinces.

"5th. The subsidy of two lacs ten thousand rupees per month, for defraying the charges of one-third of our army employed with the vizier.

"6th. The urgent and recent orders of the company for reducing charges, and procuring the means to discharge the heavy debt at

interest, heightened by the advices of their great distresses at home.

"7th. The absence of the Mahrattas from Hindostan, which left an open field for carrying the proposed plan into execution.

"8th, and lastly. The intestine divisions and dissensions in their state, which, by engaging them fully at home, would prevent interruptions from their incursions, and leave a moral certainty of success to the enterprise.

"These were the inducements which determined us to adopt this new plan of conduct; in opposition to which, one powerful objection, and only one, occurred, namely, the personal hazard we ran, in undertaking so uncommon a measure without positive instructions, at our own risk, with the eyes of the whole nation on the affairs of the company, and the passions and prejudices of almost every man in England inflamed against the conduct of the company and the characters of their servants. Notwithstanding which, we yielded to the strong necessity impressed upon us by the inducements abovementioned, in spite of the suggestions and the checks of self-interest, which set continually before our eyes the dread of forfeiting the favour of our employers and becoming the objects of popular invective, and made us involuntarily rejoice at every change in the vizier's advices which protracted the execution of the measure. At length, however, his resolution coinciding with our opinions, the enterprise was undertaken; and, if our intelligence be confirmed, it is now finally closed, with that success which we had foreseen from the beginning. We shall then again return to the state of peace from which we emerged, when we first engaged in the Rohilla expedition, with the actual possession or acknowledged right (which the power of this government can amply and effectually assert) of near seventy lacs of rupees, acquired by the monthly subsidy and the stipulation: and it rests with you to pass the ultimate judgment on our conduct."\*

M. Auber, referring to this communication, says:—

"This letter had scarcely been dispatched, when the troops were again called into the field, in consequence of intelligence that matters were accommodated between the Mahratta chieftains. The vizier was, therefore, anxious to complete the total reduction of the Rohillas without delay, by which the designs of the king and the Mahrattas, to be executed after the rains, would be defeated. The king had taken into his service Shimroo, the notorious assassin of the unfortunate prisoners at Patna."

\* Letter to Court, 17th of October, 1774.



The vizier had been punctual in his payments of the monthly subsidy for the brigade, and had given an assignment on his treasury for the fifteen lacs due by the treaty of September, 1773,\* for the second payment on account of the cession of Corah and Allahabad.

Colonel Champion, under all the circumstances, consented to advance, and soon quelled all disturbances, finally and completely establishing the authority of the nabob.

The king and the vizier entered into negotiations, by which they satisfied, or pretended to satisfy, one another. Colonel Champion was directed by the council to be present, to abstain from committing the British to any new engagements, and to watch proceedings generally. This he did with vigilance and suspicion, having been disposed to attribute too much importance to the petty intrigues of Indian courts. The colonel considered the ally of the company to be just as dangerous as their enemies.

When peace was established, Hastings directed his attention to the revenue. He abolished the office of supervisor, and established that of collector, a name which has ever since continued in the revenue system of India. Means were taken to guard against the trickery and frauds of the native occupiers of land, and at the same time to remove all hardships and inequalities, as far as it was possible to do so, without destroying those customs of the country to which the natives so tenaciously clung, even to their own disadvantage. The administration of justice next claimed the care of the indefatigable governor, whose keen and polished intellect penetrated all subjects. The information given by him to the directors on the laws, usages, and various offices and officers connected with the administration of law, was more accurate and complete than the court of directors had ever before received. The suppression of Dacoittee offered many difficulties, but the governor persevered with such skill and energy to accomplish it, that a great effect was produced, and a commensurate relief afforded to both people and government.

On the 11th of May, 1774, a measure abolishing the right to buy or sell slaves who had not previously been known as such was carried into effect. The object was to prevent child-stealing for the purposes of slavery, a practice which the Dutch and French, more especially the latter, had encouraged.

Mr. Halked, of the civil service, made an English translation of the Mohammedan and Hindoo codes of laws. This book was published in March, 1775, dedicated to Mr. Hast-

\* Vide printed Treaties.

ings, to whom the translator attributed the original plan, and the result of its execution.

Peace was not permitted to continue long in India. The restlessness of the native chiefs led them perpetually to make war upon one another, and the English were mixed up with so many of them by treaties, or agreements which had all the effect of regular treaties, that it was impossible to keep the sword sheathed. Bhotan, a mountainous district on the borders of Bengal (described in the geographical portion of this work), made war upon Cooch Bahar. The Cooch rajah claimed the protection of the English, offering to place his territory under the dominion of the Bengal government, and to pay to it half the revenues, if he were preserved in the peaceful enjoyment of the remainder, without being exposed to the depredations of his neighbours. As Cooch Bahar ranged along the British district of Rungpore, the governor acceded to the proposal. The "Deb rajah," at the head of the Bhotans, was ravaging the country of Cooch Bahar with fire and sword, never supposing that the English would interfere. The operations of a few British troops threw his highness into alarm, and the consternation spread to the remotest recesses of Bhotan. The sovereign implored the interposition of Teshoo Lama,\* who addressed to Mr. Hastings the most remarkable communication probably ever presented by any native power in India to a representative of England. The document is so curious, that it cannot fail to interest the reader.

"The affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish, and I am night and day employed for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed by travellers from your quarter of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossom of spring, abounds with gaiety, gladness, and joy. Praise! that the star of your fortune is in its ascension—praise! that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest or persecute is my aim: it is even the characteristic of my sect to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshments of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual. But in justice and humanity I am informed you surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, under the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of happiness and ease! By your favour I am the rajah and lama of this country, and rule over numbers of subjects, a particular with which you have no

\* Accounts of the Lamas, their religion, and the state of Thibet will be found in the geographical portion of this work, which the reader will do well to consult when perusing the historical chapters.



doubt been acquainted by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Dah Terrea, to which, it is said, the dah's own criminal conduct in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, has given rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race, past times are not destitute of instances of the like misconduct which his own avarice tempted him to commit: it is not unlikely that he has now resumed those instances, and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the Bengal and Bahar provinces have given you provocation to send your vindictive army against him; however, his party has been defeated; many of his people have been killed, three forts have been wrested from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved, and it is as evident as the sun, your army has been victorious; and that if you had been desirous of it, you might in the space of two days have entirely extirpated him, for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator, and to represent to you, that as the said Dah Terrea is dependent upon the Dalee Lama, who rules this country with unlimited sway (but on account of his being in his minority, the charge of the government and administration for the present is committed to me), should you persist in offering further molestation to the dah's country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease all hostilities against him, and in doing this you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the dah for his past conduct, and I have admonished

him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all matters. I am persuaded that he will conform to the advice which I have given him, and it will be necessary that you treat him with compassion. As to my part, I am but a fakeer, and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind and the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you cease all hostilities against the dah in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Goseign, will represent to you all particulars, and it is hoped that you will comply therewith. In this country worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having a few things in hand I send them to you by way of remembrance, and I hope for your acceptance of them."

A treaty, consisting of ten articles, was agreed to on the 25th of April. Some lands were restored to the Deb Rajah, who was to pay to the company for the possession of the Chitta Cotta province a tribute of five Tauzan horses: the Bhotan merchants were allowed to send a caravan annually to Rungpore. Mr. Hastings saw that the communication from the Teshoo Lama opened an opportunity for effecting regular intercourse between Thibet and Bengal, and he proposed that Mr. Bogle be sent by the council to the Lama, with a letter and presents, accompanied by a sample of goods, with the view of ascertaining which might be made objects of commerce. The council concurred in the views of the president. Mr. Hamilton accompanied Mr. Bogle as assistant-surgeon.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL UNDER WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA, TO THE DEATH OF GENERAL CLAVERING—ARRIVAL OF MEMBERS OF THE NEW COUNCIL—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE MAJORITY OF THE COUNCIL AND THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL—A CONSPIRACY AGAINST HASTINGS, AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS CONTRIVED BY NUNDCOOMAR—THE BRAHMIN CONVICTED OF FORGERY, AND HANGED BY SENTENCE OF THE SUPREME COURT—MARRIAGE OF HASTINGS—DEATH OF MONSON AND CLAVERING, LEAVING HASTINGS IN A MAJORITY AT THE COUNCIL BOARD.

IN the last chapter on home events connected with the company, it was related that in consequence of parliamentary interposition various new regulations were made for the government of India, and that among these, Mr. Hastings, president of the council of Bengal, and governor of the Bengal provinces, was to be designated governor-general of

India, that the other presidencies and provinces should, to a certain extent, be subjected to the governor-general's superintendence; and certain new councillors were nominated, who proceeded to Bengal. On the 19th of October, 1774, the new council, with the exception of Mr. Barwell, who was in the country, arrived at Calcutta, and were received



with public honours. Next day a council was held. Proclamation was ordered, announcing that the new government, under "the regulation act," began that day. Various new and useful regulations were made under the auspices of the new council; among these one was especially beneficial,—the establishment of a board of trade, by which commercial affairs should be exclusively the object of attention.

The decrees upon which the directors and the royal government had agreed were placed before the governor-general and council, which may be thus summed up:—A commission was issued to the governor-general, constituting him governor and commander-in-chief of the fortress and garrison of Fort William and town of Calcutta.\* Lieutenant-general Clavering was granted a commission as commander-in-chief of all the company's forces in India. If the governor-general and council should at any time think proper to issue orders, under their hands, or by their secretary, to any officer in the army, thereby suspending or superseding the specific commands of the governor-general or military commander-in-chief, such orders were to be implicitly obeyed. The military commander-in-chief was not to leave Bengal without the sanction of the governor-general and council. Whenever the commander-in-chief in India was at either of the other presidencies, he was to have a seat as second in council; but to vote only on political and military affairs. His allowances, as commander-in-chief, were fixed at £6,000 per annum, and his salary, as a member of council, at £10,000 per annum. Copies of the commission to Mr. Hastings and to Lieutenant-general Clavering, and of the court's instructions, were to be forthwith published in general orders at Fort William. In addition to the foregoing instructions, a general letter was addressed to the governor-general and council. The measures of the president regarding Cooch Bahar were approved, although the court by no means departed from the rule laid down, of confining their views to the possessions thus acquired. Whenever General Clavering could be spared from his duties in Bengal, he was to proceed to Madras and Bombay, to review the troops, and to make a strict examination into the state of the company's armies at each presidency, and to assist the presidents and councils in forming such regulations as might be necessary for rendering the forces respectable. A revision of the coinage was to be made in Bengal, a treatise thereon, by Sir James Stuart, Bart., being forwarded for the infor-

mation of the council.\* At the instance of Mr. Hastings, the council adjourned from Thursday, the 20th October, until the Monday following, on which day, Mr. Barwell having arrived at the presidency, the oaths of office were administered, and the commissions to the governor-general and the commander-in-chief promulgated. In order to place the leading branches of the public affairs before the council, a minute was delivered in by Mr. Hastings, reviewing the revenue system and the political state of the provinces.

Discussions arose upon the minute of Mr. Hastings, which threatened to assume important consequences, so far did the views of the new council and the governor-general diverge.

Upon discussion of the treaty of Benares and the Rohilla war, General Clavering called for the original correspondence between the resident at the vizier's court and the president. Mr. Hastings objected to produce private correspondence, but was ready to lay public documents before the council. A majority resolved that *all* ought to be produced. He maintained that the usage of the Bengal government was in harmony with his views, that he was willing in future transactions to be guided by the council, but would not submit to an *ex post facto* law, suddenly formed. The council ordered the agent down to Calcutta, and to bring the whole correspondence with him, Colonel Champion to act as political agent in the meantime. General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis were determined to restrain the power of the governor, and to assume among themselves the authority. Mr. Francis was much the most intellectual person of the three new councillors; he was a man of keen discrimination, of a critical habit, insubordinate, ambitious, persevering, tenacious, bitter, and unrelenting. He was in some respects well fitted to cope with Mr. Hastings in the intellectual arena where they met. This will be readily believed by all readers, when they recognise in Mr. Francis the celebrated "Junius," whose political writings had previously made such a noise in the world, and around the authorship of which so much mystery and interest have remained to the present day. The light of recent investigations leaves no possibility of doubt that Mr. Philip Francis, the refractory colleague of Hastings in the council of Bengal, was the "Junius" whose

\* The object of this was to prevent disputes about authority with the commander-in-chief.

\* This gentleman composed, for the use of the East India Company, in 1772, a work entitled, *The Principles of Money applied to the present State of Bengal*. It was printed, and the court presented him with a ring, of one hundred guineas value, with a suitable inscription, in testimony of their sense of this service. M. Auber, vol. i. p. 449.



political criticism, satire, and invective have excited so large an amount of political and literary interest.

Clavering, Monson, and Francis perpetually complained to the directors that their dignity and consequence had not been considered sufficiently by Mr. Hastings. Mr. Barwell sided with the governor-general. Each party sent home its own reports. Clavering, Monson, and Francis sought to grasp the government, and make the governor-general a mere puppet in their hands. The replies of Hastings to their complaints are admirable specimens of logical and eloquent writing, and are pervaded by a manliness and dignity which could not have failed to impress the directors.

While these painful discussions rent the council, and this adverse correspondence concerning the vizier and the policy which had been pursued towards him was going on, that remarkable person died, and his son, under the title of Asoff-ul-Dowlah, succeeded to Oude and its dependencies. Previous to his death the vizier had paid fifteen out of the forty lacs of rupees stipulated.

The council considered that the treaty with Oude terminated with the nabob's life, and proposed another treaty with his successor, of a purely defensive nature. The council contrived to make the new treaty a means of fresh acquisitions, and accordingly the zemindaree of Benares was made over to them, without being encumbered with any new engagements or loading them with additional expenses. The revenues amounted to rupees 1,23,72,656, and were to be paid by the Rajah Cheyte Sing in monthly payments, as a net tribute, without rendering any accounts of his collections, or being allowed to enter any claim for deductions. The nabob agreed to pay 2,60,000 rupees per month for a brigade of the company's troops, which was an addition of half a lac to the former allowance. The important point was gained of his consenting to dismiss all foreigners from his service, and his engaging to deliver up Cossim Ally Cawn, and Shimroo, the assassin of the English at Patna, should they ever fall into his hands. The provinces of Corah and Allahabad were to remain with the nabob.\* Instructions were sent to Colonel Galliez to continue with the brigade in the territories of Oude for their defence, and for that of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, should the nabob require it. Hostilities had for some time been carried on between Nudjiff Cawn, the Rajpoots, and Jats, and they had alternately sought an alliance with the nabob in support of their

respective views. The latter, jealous of Nudjiff Cawn, had evinced a disposition to join his opponents. The grand object of the council was to preserve a good understanding between the vizier and the other neighbouring powers, for which purpose Mr. Bristow was ordered to take the necessary measures, and at the same time to urge the nabob to attend to the good government and improvement of his dominions.

Conflicts and treaties appeared now to have been terminated so far as Oude was concerned, although the young nabob had manifested an indisposition to concede much that the English required, but he chiefly showed dislike to their insisting upon good government in Oude as absolutely essential to the peace of the English territory and the alliance. If Oude were ill-governed, insurrections in Oude proper, and in the Rohilla country, would break out, and Jats, Rajpoots, Mah-rattas, and Affghans were all ready to swoop down upon any country of Hindostan that was torn by internal strife. The presence of these marauding hordes on the confines of Bengal caused expense and alarm to the English; it was, therefore, vital to them that Oude should be so governed as to leave no apprehension of a border warfare. His majesty had a firm conviction that he might do as he pleased with his own, without being careful for the consequences to his neighbours; and he submitted with a surly and dubious acquiescence to the terms imposed upon him.

When the affairs of Oude were brought to what appeared to be a happy termination, the opinion of the directors upon past events reached Calcutta. They agreed in the main with Mr. Hastings, and where they differed gave him credit for doing what he did with the best intentions. On some points they agreed with his opponents, but not at all with the spirit and temper of the opposition. Mr. Barwell's view, urged from the moment of his arrival in India, that the new council had nothing to do with past transactions, the responsibility of which rested with Mr. Hastings and the former administration, was evidently that which the directors espoused; but they so framed their despatch as to induce, if possible, the two parties to coalesce for the common good. Had the directors known the men of whom the council was composed, they would never have expected compliance with any such instructions. Hastings was a man of undoubted genius; he was conciliatory, and had much self-control. All this the directors knew, and hoped the best from that knowledge. During Mr. Vansittart's government he was in opposition, as has been shown, to

\* The treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow, whose conduct on the occasion was highly applauded by the supreme government.



the majority of the Bengal council ; but while discharging his duty faithfully and firmly, he bore himself in a manner so gentlemanly and urbane as to deprive the council of any opportunity of showing ill-will personally to him,—even the vehement and unabashed Johnstone, the worst of as bad a set of men as ever administered the government of an English dependency, treated Hastings with decorum. During the time Mr. Hastings had served on the Madras council the follies of that body were innumerable. Unable to control or influence them, he took little part in the active politics of the period, and devoted himself to the prosecution of the trade of the company, and with such success as to ensure his promotion to Bengal. But the directors did not know that with the *suaviter in modo* Hastings united in so extraordinary a degree the *fortiter in re*. They had no experience of his indomitable will and strenuous persistence of purpose in all dangers and against all odds. It was their belief that the good manners, graceful language, accomplished scholarship, and gentle self-respect of the governor-general, added to the influence of his high position, would gradually dissolve a hostile party, and attach it to himself.

Mr. Barwell had long resided in India, and was a valuable servant, of industrious habits, and great experience in the company's business. The company reposed confidence in his integrity, propriety of conduct, and peaceful, co-operative disposition. Clavering they did not know. He was a man of intense prejudices, to which he was always ready to sacrifice the public interests. A king's officer, he disdained the military service of the company, although more than once he was constrained to compliment the talent displayed by its officers. He and Colonel Monson went out to India determined to thwart the company's civil servants, especially the governor-general, believing that by so doing they would be sustained by public prejudice in England, and by the ill-will to the company then prevailing in the House of Commons. There was a large party of politicians in England desirous of destroying the company, and handing over to government their territorial possessions. These were the leading party men who sought the power and patronage which would accrue to their parties respectively, if the dominions of the company were governed under the immediate control of the English ministry. Francis was a turbulent tyrant, haughty, arrogant, and malignant. The directors had no knowledge of his peculiar temperament, nor of his peculiar parts. Lord Macaulay exhibits the disappointed and bitter spirit of Francis at that time, and ex-

plains the circumstantial causes of the peculiar intensity of the bitterness and discontent he manifested, in a characteristic manner, and with accurate statements, in the following terms : " It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country, which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Everything had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to 'Junius.' His opinions on domestic affairs separated him from the ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the opposition. Under such circumstances he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the 19th of January, 1773. In that letter he declared that he must be an idiot to write again; that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there were not ten men who would act together on any question. 'But it is all alike,' he added, 'vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity.' These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal."

The directors, although they did not know the temper and talent of Francis, knew enough of his antecedents to be aware that no post would satisfy his ambition, no courtesy conciliate his temper, and that his combative spirit would eke out a cause of quarrel in any affairs of which he had only in part the management. He had served in various departments of state, in all cleverly, and in none with satisfaction to those who employed him.

One of the first proofs afforded of how little the advice of the directors prevailed with the new members of council was the mode in which the latter interfered with the revenues of Bengal. Hastings had with great care and skill amended the fiscal system, and reorganized the civil staff of the company. The new council forming a majority of one, undid much of what Hastings had done. They were utterly ignorant of the laws, customs, and views of the people, but with rash hands they pulled down, and with unskilful hands they built up. They put new cloth into old garments, and new wine into old bottles, verifying the aptness of the Scripture



illustration. They threw the minor presidencies of Madras and Bombay into confusion by ignorant meddling, for Francis (or "Junius," if he may be so distinguished) considered himself as having a natural title to rule everybody, and a natural gift to govern everything. His imperious commands, endorsed by Clavering and Monson, were let loose as a curse upon India. Lord Macaulay describes the effects of this administration to have been that "all protection to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers slaughtered and plundered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the government house, and to draw the salary of governor-general. He continued even to take the lead at the council board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided both surely and speedily, which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him." While affairs were growing gradually into confusion, and three members of council, Philip Francis and his two military adherents, were destroying the usefulness and the influence of Hastings, Nundcoomar, so often upon the scene as an evil spirit before, appeared again. He determined to destroy Hastings by charges of corruption sustained by perjury and forgery, and thus be avenged personally for the defeat of previous schemes of villainy discovered and denounced by Hastings. He hoped also to raise himself on the ruins of the great Englishman, and perhaps to enrich himself in any general confusion that might arise out of his schemes. He was destined once more, and for the last time, and fatally, to find that Hastings, with all his mildness of manner, was more than his match in a grand conflict of intellectual acumen; at all events, when there was also scope for resolute and determined action. Four men of master intellect were now about to play a game upon which honour, reputation, and life itself might depend. These men were Warren Hastings, Philip Francis, Sir Elijah Impey the chief-justice, and, scarcely inferior to any of them in astuteness, Nundcoomar, the great Brahmin. Nundcoomar set on foot the mighty tournament of intellectual strength and political chicane, in which all were to suffer, but he most of all.

In the presence of a number of natives of distinction, probably brought together for the purpose, Nundcoomar placed in the hands of Philip Francis a sealed packet addressed to the council, with the request that it might be opened and read in their presence as it

was for the good of the company and the country, and of vital consequence. Francis introduced it to the council and read it. It was an impeachment of the governor-general, for putting offices for sale, receiving bribes, suffering offenders to escape, and other crimes similar in kind. The morning the paper was read by Francis before the council, Lord Macaulay says "Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated." It is astonishingly strange that his lordship should so characterise the tone or terms of the governor's remarks. He spoke with a calm and lofty dignity free from all bitterness and passion. He did not even betray emotion, but bore himself with a manly self-possession, and expressed himself in words free from contempt of others, except the oft convicted and unprincipled Nundcoomar. The language of Hastings was a noble illustration of the sentiment "*Nec timeo nec sperno*." Hastings denied the right of the council to sit in judgment upon him; and, recording his protest, retired. At the next assemblage of the council, another packet from Nundcoomar was unsealed by Francis, who admitted that although he had not seen the first packet, he knew substantially what it contained. There was in fact a conspiracy suggested by Nundcoomar, patronised and encouraged by Francis, worked out by the crafty Brahmin, supported by the stupid military adherents of Junius, now finding full scope for his great talents and malignant passions. Nundcoomar petitioned for leave to appear before the council, in order to sustain his charges. Hastings protested against such a course, alleging that the supreme court was the proper place. The three opposing councillors thought otherwise. Nundcoomar was heard, not indeed by the council, for the president dissolved it, but by the three members who were themselves conspirators, and called themselves the council for the occasion.

The events in the council chamber have been described with brevity by Lord Macaulay, thus:—"Nundcoomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a large sum for appointing Rajah Goordas treasurer of the nabob's household, and for committing the care of his highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nundcoomar, as everybody knows who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum that such a letter



would give pleasure to the majority of the council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds; and that he ought to be compelled to refund."

There were important points brought out in the investigation of these accusations which proved that Nundcoomar had either committed, or suborned some one to commit, a forgery for the purpose of ruining Hastings. The letter alleged to be written by the hand of the Munny Begum, which Nundcoomar delivered in, was compared with one received from her by Sir John D'Oyley, from the Persian department. The seal was pronounced to be the same on both letters, the handwriting to be different. M. Auber, noticing what followed, says:—"The majority observed that the letter to Nundcoomar had been written a year and a half before, and the letter produced by Sir John D'Oyley within a few days. In either case there was sufficient proof of the delinquency of Nundcoomar. If its authenticity be admitted, its contents establish the fact of a conspiracy on the part of the Begum and Nundcoomar. If its authenticity be denied, the guilt of forgery against Nundcoomar is placed beyond doubt."

On the 11th of April Nundcoomar was accused before the judges of the supreme court of being party to a conspiracy against the governor-general and others, by compelling a man to write a petition injurious to their characters, and sign a statement of bribes, alleged to have been received by his excellency and his servants. Next day an examination was instituted before the judges. A charge on oath was exhibited against Nundcoomar, one Radaehum, and an Englishman named Fowke. The accused were bound over to take their trial at the following assizes.

General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, accompanied by Fowke, one of the accused, went the next day to Nundcoomar's house, to pay him a formal visit. They also, both in Calcutta and in London, took means to influence public opinion by publishing the alleged vices of the governor. In Calcutta, where circumstances and men were known and understood, these efforts utterly failed, and a strong tide of indignation set in against the three members of council. In England their efforts were more fortunate, and prejudice was circulated in the court of directors and in parliament, as well as in the country, against Hastings. Hastings, aware of their exertions, also struggled to maintain the justice of his

own cause. In a letter written to the directors at this juncture, the following passage occurs, in which, in respectful, dignified, and feeling terms, he appeals to the public opinion of his countrymen in India, as to the rectitude of his conduct and the malevolence of his persecutors:—"There are many men in England of unquestioned knowledge and integrity, who have been eye-witness of all the transactions of this government in the short interval in which I had the chief direction of it. There are many hundreds in England who have correspondents in Bengal, from whom they have received successive advices of those transactions, and opinions of the authors of them. I solemnly make my appeal to these concurring testimonies, and if, in justice to your honourable court, by whom I was chosen for the high station which I lately filled, by whom my conduct has been applauded, and through whom I have obtained the distinguished honour assigned me by the legislature itself, in my nomination to fill the first place in the new administration of India, I may be allowed the liberty of making so uncommon a request, I do most earnestly entreat that you will be pleased to call upon those who, from their own knowledge or the communications of others, can contribute such information, to declare severally the opinions which they have entertained of the measures of my administration, the tenor of my conduct in every department of this government, and the effects which it has produced, both in conciliating the minds of the natives to the British government, in confirming your authority over the country, and in advancing your interest in it. From these, and from the testimonies of your own records, let me be judged, not from the malevolent declamations of those who, having no services of their own to plead, can only found their reputation on the destruction of mine."

Meanwhile Nundcoomar and the majority of the council were shamelessly and openly identified in their efforts to annihilate the reputation and the power of Hastings. On the 6th of May, however, the Brahmin was arrested upon a charge of forgery by a merchant of Calcutta. That this imputation was a *bonâ fide* one no one doubted, for all knew that there was no villainy which the dishonest and perjurious Brahmin would not perpetrate. On the 9th of May the majority of the council displaced Munny Begum, the guardian of the infant nabob, on the ground of speculation of the revenues. This was the person on the accusation of whose letter the majority of the council had accused Hastings! Either they never believed her, or discovered, after the accusation was made, that her testimony was



worthless, or they knew, from the first, that the letter, alleged to be in her handwriting, had not been written by her. The conduct of the council in deposing her, after having a short time before paraded her as a witness against Hastings, scandalized all Calcutta; but the scandal was far greater when, immediately after, a son of Nundcoomar, a person of notorious incapacity, was placed virtually in her stead. Thus the repeatedly convicted perjurer, forger, and treason-monger was publicly honoured, while yet under the impeachment of another added to his many well-known crimes. It is not credible that Francis and his two military coadjutors would have dared to proceed to such lengths if not encouraged by private correspondence with the ministerial party in parliament anxious to wrest the government of India from the company, for sake of the patronage, their eagerness to seize which was too great for them to disguise. While Nundcoomar was in prison, he petitioned the council that he could not perform the ablutions necessary for him as a Brahmin while in a state of such confinement. The council addressed the judges on the subject, thinking to make the circumstance a ground for Nundcoomar's release. The judges replied that they had taken thought of the matter, and appointed certain learned pundits to report upon the case, whose report was to the effect that the accommodation was sufficient; that caste would not be lost by the prisoner. The judges, however, in spirited and indignant terms, insisted that the council should not again presume to interfere with the course of British justice; that if the prisoner was aggrieved, the judges, not the council, were the persons to whom to appeal; that they understood their duty without any monitions from a portion of the council; and that as the natives sought everything from power and nothing from justice, the judgment-seat must be preserved from even the appearance of government interference. Nundcoomar remained in prison until the assizes, and his trial came on in the routine of its business. He was arraigned before an English jury, and his trial was conducted with the strictest impartiality and fairness; a verdict was returned in the usual manner, after the deliberation customary with British juries, and that verdict was *Guilty*. Never was a verdict more in accordance with truth and justice. Sir Elijah Impey, the chief-justice, sentenced the guilty man to death. Great was the consternation of the council; they protested, but no notice was taken of their protest. Public opinion sustained that of the jury: Englishmen and natives believed that he was guilty. Colonel Clavering

vowed that Nundcoomar must be saved, even from the foot of the gallows; but he knew well that Hastings was determined that justice should have its course, and that Sir Elijah Impey, the chief-justice, was also determined to vindicate the law, and the independence of the judges, at all costs. The natives would not believe that any judge would dare to sentence a Brahmin, or that judges or governor would permit one so sacred to be executed for any crime. They knew he was as bad a man as ever fell by the executioner; but he was a Brahmin, and the priestly caste was sacred. On the day of his execution vast multitudes crowded to Calcutta, still unbelieving as to the fate of the chief Brahmin of Bengal. Whether from the impression that, at the last moment, he would be forcibly rescued by the council, or respited by the administrative authorities, or from the strange indifference to death which characterises his caste, he approached his fate without any sign of fear or reluctance. He ascended the scaffold calmly, and, to all appearance, fearlessly, and was hanged. The lamentations of the people were such as not merely to astonish, but to awe the British. They detested and yet revered Nundcoomar; they lamented because their religion was outraged by the ignominious execution of a Brahmin, a caste which sinned with impunity so far as Hindoo law and custom were concerned. Neither Nundcoomar nor the natives had any idea that there was among the English a power greater than that of a governor-general, or a council, or a general of an army,—the power of law as seen and administered in the courts and from the tribunals of law. This was to them a new idea, and struck universal terror into their hearts. The effect, as it regarded Hastings, was immediate. There were no more forgeries and perjuries manufactured to please the more powerful council: the dread of the mysterious tribunal appalled a whole nation of liars and perjurers. Nothing could prove more fully the turpitude and cowardice of the native character than these disgraceful transactions had done. When to accuse the governor-general pleased those more powerful than he, numbers were ready to meet their wishes by accusations; but when it was seen that there was an authority higher than governor-general and council combined—that of English law—their hearts were stricken with fear, and none dared to resort to the arts of knavery and treachery, so much their practice and delight.

Much blame has been thrown upon the judges, especially Chief-justice Impey. Lord Macaulay doubts the legality of the proceeding, and describes Sir Elijah Impey as the



tool of Hastings. There was nothing in the conduct of Sir Elijah in trying Nundcoomar, or in accepting the verdict of the jury, to justify this language. Whether Sir Elijah had authority to pronounce the sentence which he did pronounce was open to discussion, was discussed, and many men fit to determine such a question have decided in his favour. The whole case has received a clear and impartial statement from the pen of Professor Wilson. He thus puts it:—"It is true that no circumstance in the administration of Hastings has been so injurious to his reputation as the execution of Nundcoomar—whether rightfully so is a different question. From the moment that Nundcoomar became the object of judicial investigation, it would have ill become the governor to have interfered—it was not for him to interpose his personal or official influence to arrest the course of the law, nor would it have availed. The supreme court was new to its position, strongly impressed with a notion of its dignity, and sensitively jealous of its power. The judges would have at once indignantly resisted any attempt to bias their decision. For the fate of Nundcoomar they are alone responsible. It is presently admitted that they decided according to law, and the attempt to impeach the chief-justice, Sir Elijah Impey, on this ground, subsequently failed. It is therefore to be concluded that the sentence was strictly according to law, and there can be no doubt that the crime was proved. The infliction of the sentence, however, upon a native of India, for an offence of which his countrymen knew not the penalty, and which had been committed before the full introduction of those laws which made it a capital crime, was the assertion of law at the expense of reason and humanity: with this Hastings has nothing to do—the fault, and a grievous one it was, rests with the judges. The question, as it concerns the governor, regards only the share he had in the prosecution. Did he in any way instigate or encourage it? The prosecutor was a party concerned, a native, unconnected with the governor. He may have thought he was doing a not unacceptable act in prosecuting a personal antagonist of Hastings, but that was his feeling. There is no necessity to suppose that he was urged on by Hastings: he had wrongs of his own to avenge, and needed no other instigation. There is no positive proof that he acted in concert with Hastings; we are therefore left to circumstantial proof, and the only circumstance upon which the participation of Hastings in the prosecution of Nundcoomar can be founded is, its following hard upon the latter's charges against him. These were preferred on March 11th, 1775. On the 6th of May following

Nundcoomar was arrested under a warrant of the court at the suit of Mohun Persaud. Here is certainly a suspicious coincidence—but is there no other way of accounting for it than by imputations fatal to the character of W. Hastings? In truth, it seems capable of such explanation as acquits Hastings of having exercised any influence over it. Proceedings in the same cause did not then commence. They had been instituted before in the Dewanny Adaulut, and Nundcoomar had been confined by the judge, but released by order of Hastings. The suit had therefore been suspended, but it had not been discontinued. The supreme court sat for the first time at the end of October, 1774. The forged instrument had been deposited in the mayor's court, and could not be recovered until all the papers had been transferred to the supreme court, and without it no suit could be proceeded with. At the very first opportunity afterwards, or in the commencement of 1775, at the first effective court of Oyer and Terminer and gaol delivery held by the supreme court, the indictment was preferred and tried. It is not necessary to suspect Hastings of having from vindictive motives suggested or accelerated the prosecution. It had previously been brought into another court, where it was asserted the influence of the governor-general had screened the criminal, and it was again brought into an independent court at the first possible moment when it could be instituted. The coincidence was unfortunate, but it seems to have been unavoidable; and in the absence of all possible proof, the conjectural evidence is not unexceptionable enough to justify the imputation so recklessly advanced by Burke, and seemingly implied in the observations of the text, that Hastings had murdered Nundcoomar by the hands of Sir E. Impey."\*

Upon the effect of this event on the fortunes of Hastings, and upon the government of Bengal, Lord Macaulay remarks as follows:—"The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful, the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favour of those who then

\* The learned doctor deduced his opinion from the following sources of information:—"For the preceding charges against Mr. Hastings, and the proceedings of the council, see the Eleventh Report of the Select Committee, in 1781, with its Appendix; Burke's Charges against Hastings, No. 8, and Hastings' Answer to the Eighth Charge, with the Minutes of Evidence on the trial pp. 953—1001; and the Charges against Sir Elijah Impey, exhibited to the House of Commons by Sir Gilbert Elliot, in 1787, with the Speech of Impey in reply to the first charge, printed, with an Appendix, by Stockdale, in 1788. For the execution and behaviour of Nundcoomar, see a very interesting account, written by the sheriff who superintended, and printed in Dodsley's *Annual Register* for 1788, Historical part, p. 157."



held the government, fenced round by the superstitious reverence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Everything that could make the warning impressive,—dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding,—was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the conviction of every native was, that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority than of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturesome to join in running down the governor-general might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silent in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives of India."

The calm resolution of Hastings under the most trying circumstances was proved by his conduct throughout these trying and harassing affairs, especially in the episode of the execution of Nundcoomar. Miss Martineau draws from the calm resolve of the governor of Bengal proof of his want of feeling, and of an indurated heart. This opinion is undoubtedly severe, and probably unjust. The discussion, however, of such questions belongs rather to the task of the biographer than the historian. Lord Macaulay was struck with the coolness of the English governor on this occasion, and truly observes:—"It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nundcoomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession, to write about the *Tour to the Hebrides*, Jones' *Persian Grammar*, and the history, tradition, arts, and natural productions of India."

When tidings of all these events reached England, there was commotion in the cabinet and the court of directors. The majority in the council of Bengal had powerful interest at home. Lord North was adverse to Hastings, and endeavoured to procure from the company an address, upon which, by virtue of "the regulation act," under which Hastings was appointed, the minister would be empowered to remove him. Lord North was anxious to put Clavering in the place of Hastings, as the general was the minister's nominee, and the confederate of the other two members of council constituting the factious majority, for a majority may be factious as well as a minority. This is not the appropriate place in which to

depict the peculiar features of the contest among the directors, the court of proprietary, and the cabinet ministers; suffice it to say that Lord North was defeated, and never did a minister show less dignity under a political defeat than did his lordship on that occasion. Hastings, having foreseen this contest, had provided against it. He had placed in the hands of his agent, Colonel Maclean, his resignation, with directions to present it to the court only when a moment of such emergency should arise as imperatively to demand such a course. Menaced on all hands as Hastings was, notwithstanding his recent victory over Lord North and the ministry, Maclean felt that there was no means of saving his friend from expulsion and degradation but by an opportune use of the power entrusted to him, and he accordingly presented the resignation. The directors eagerly accepted it, and nominated one of their own body, a Mr. Wheeler, to the vacated post, at the same time writing to General Clavering to assume the government of Bengal *pro tempore*.

While these things were proceeding in London, events were passing in rapid succession in Bengal, which had an equal, or even greater influence upon the fortunes of Hastings, and enabled the intrepid and self-collected man to overbear all obstacles and all hostilities. Monson died, and left Hastings only two opponents in the council—Clavering and Francis. His casting vote enabled him to determine all matters in favour of his own policy. Thus after two years of persecution, and while bearing the insignia of office, holding only the semblance of power, he became absolute, for Barwell, although a clever man, and far better acquainted with the administration of Indian business than Clavering or Francis, was yet completely under the influence of Hastings. The governor now seized upon the patronage of the province, displacing the officials who were appointed by the late majority, and reversing all their partizan decrees. In order to mark more signally that a new era had commenced, Hastings ordered, in the name of the council (by power of his casting vote), a valuation of the lands of Bengal, in order to form a basis for a new plan of revenue. All correspondence was ordered to be under his sole control, and the whole inquiry to be directed by him. He next laid down vast schemes for the aggrandizement of the company's interests, for which, and not for any venal purposes, he thought and toiled. The plans he projected were realized, and within his own lifetime, although it was not reserved for his own administration to carry them out. While he was thus engaged the intelligence arrived



from England of the proceedings in the cabinet, the court of directors, and the court of proprietary, in which he was so deeply interested.

Hastings had in the meantime, by the sheer force of his genius, industry, and intelligence, as well as by the concurrence of events, gained such a personal ascendancy in India, that he was unwilling to surrender his high functions, especially, even for a season, to his rival—Clavering. He refused to surrender the presidential chair. Clavering essayed to occupy it by force, and a fierce struggle ensued. Clavering, with much show of reason, appealed to the orders of the directors. Hastings replied that the orders were based upon a mistake, which, when the directors discovered, they would themselves of necessity abrogate. He declared that he had not resigned his office. His own account long afterwards of the transaction was, that Maclean had exceeded and misapprehended his powers; but that nevertheless he would have resigned the government of Bengal had not Clavering made offensive haste and insulting demonstrations, in his eagerness to grasp the office.

Clavering, immediately on the arrival of intelligence, seized the keys of the fort, important papers, books, and documents, and formed Francis and himself into a council. Hastings sat in another apartment of the fort with Barwell, and continued to issue the orders of government, which none dared to disobey, so completely had the master mind of Hastings asserted itself. The English in Bengal unanimously, or all but unanimously, supported him; and the Bengalees had trembled at his name ever since the rope had put an end to the intrigues of Nundcoomar. Either Hastings felt that his cause was just, or that he had the formalities of law on his side, for he offered to abide by the decision of the supreme court of Calcutta. This met the approbation of the English in Bengal, who saw no other way of averting a

civil struggle, which might be attended with bloodshed, and ruinous to English interests. Clavering was compelled to succumb to public opinion, although he and Francis were averse to any arbitration of matters, legal or otherwise.

The decision of the court was that the resignation presented by Colonel Maclean was invalid, and that Hastings, according to the letter of the "Regulation Act," was still governor-general. After this, Clavering and Francis lost all hope of offering an effectual resistance.

Immediately upon these transactions Hastings married a foreign lady, the divorced wife of a foreigner, with whom he had lived on terms of illicit intimacy for years, and under circumstances the most singular, romantic, and reprehensible, furnishing to his biographers ample material for exciting narrative, and ingenious speculations as to his character. It does not speak well for the morality of English society at Calcutta at the time, that the wedding was celebrated with great splendour by the whole community. Hastings, elated with the success of all his schemes in love and politics, invited General Clavering to the wedding. The general was at the time broken in spirit and in health; he was in fact dying. Making the state of his health his only excuse for not affording his presence at the festivities, Hastings went personally to him, and insisted upon the oblivion of past differences being thus publicly proved. Clavering was brought captive, as it were, to the brilliant festivities; but he drooped there, and retired to die. In a few days he expired. Francis now alone remained to oppose Hastings. His proud and arrogant spirit could not be quelled. He struggled for a time with dogged and spiteful pertinacity, and then went home, where he lived long enough to be a thorn in the side of Hastings, when, at the greatest crisis of his history, he stood impeached before the senate of England.



CHAPTER LXXXIV.

GOVERNMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL (*Continued*)—ARRIVAL OF MR. WHELER TO ASSUME THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL—REFUSAL OF HASTINGS TO SURRENDER IT—OPPRESSIVENESS OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATION IN BENGAL—DUEL BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND PHILIP FRANCIS—FRANCIS LEAVES INDIA—ANARCHY IN OUDE—WAR WITH THE MAHRATTAS.

WHEN Mr. Wheeler arrived at Calcutta he found Hastings in the full possession of authority, and likely to retain it. The disappointed governor was, however, a member of council, and united with Francis in opposition to the governor *de facto*. Their opposition was of little avail. Hastings continued to rule, and with such personal tact, administrative capacity, and comprehensive genius, that the directors at home veered round in his favour, and Lord North dared not to displace him. Events in Europe favoured the uninterrupted possession by Hastings of the presidency of Bengal. England had to maintain a fearful struggle with foreign enemies, and her own colonial fellow-citizens in America became disaffected. Wars abroad, and bad government at home, placed England in imminent danger. The cabinet, instead of assailing Hastings, were glad to have a governor who knew so well how to govern. The English ministry had no leisure to attend to India.

Although Hastings had undisputed authority, his difficulties were great, and scarcely was one danger encountered, and conquered by his genius, than another sprang up. War in regions beyond the province of Bengal, blunders by his own officers, civil and military, and the harassing opposition of Francis and Wheeler, occupied his industry and vigilance incessantly. Before noticing the war-like events of his government not already related, it is desirable to glance at the civil impediments to his sway with which he had to contend. Sir Eyre Coote, who had distinguished himself so much in Indian warfare, from the battle of Plassey to that of Wandiwash and the capture of Pondicherry, and after the warfare of the Carnatic, elsewhere, was appointed commander-in-chief of the company's armies. This appointment gave him a seat at the council board, and being naturally obstinate, haughty, and self-willed, he frequently disputed the authority of Hastings, and sided with Francis and Wheeler. When this was the case, Hastings was in a minority, and his views were overruled. The vigilance of Francis never slept. His bitterness was as lasting as his vigilance was wakeful. There were, therefore, many occasions on which he succeeded, with due management of Coote, in

putting Hastings into a minority. Hastings, however, practised the arts of management better than Francis, and by gratifying Coote's love of "allowances," in a majority of instances secured his vote. Besides, Coote more generally agreed with Hastings than with Francis. The latter was ignorant of India, but the commander-in-chief, like the governor-general, knew it well. Moreover, the soldier was often in the field, and then the governor had his own way without any chance of being disturbed. These contingencies in the constitution of the council, gave uncertainty to their decisions, and frustrated some of the best administrative measures of the president.

A singular state of things arose under the pretensions of the judges. English law was hated by all classes of the natives, and it was administered proudly and oppressively. Its slowness and expensiveness were ruinous to the natives, who groaned under its oppressions. Sir Elijah Impey, as chief of the supreme court, had the highest possible notions of his own official authority, and the respect due to all the forms of law. He was supported by the other judges in a system of legal administration which evoked the curses of the whole community, English and natives. No man felt safe from the tyranny of the courts. The civil servants were constantly unable to carry out the orders of the government from their interference; and Hastings, who had himself done so much to recognise the power of the courts, was almost driven to despair by the way in which that power was wielded. Words could not describe the misery, conflict, and disaffection which ensued, as far as the supreme court extended its authority, and probably no problem in the government of Hastings presented itself as so hard of solution as that of the true province of the English courts. Lord Macaulay ascribes the evil in this case to the indifference of the legislature in forming "the regulation act:"—"The authors of the regulating act of 1773 had established two independent powers, the one judicial, and the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define their respective limits." The same author depicts the



results of the consequent efforts of the judges to define the limits of their own authority in the most extensive manner, and amongst others gives the following descriptions:—"Many natives highly considered among their countrymen, were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common gaol, not for any crime imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come for trial." "There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alguazils of Impey." "No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the justice of the supreme court."

It is not to be supposed that Sir Elijah Impey acted illegally. Many of the acts of the courts which spread terror and despair through Bengal were tamely submitted to in England, and supposed to be a becoming "part and parcel" of a most just code, the pride of England and the envy of surrounding nations. The laws and the courts were terrible oppressions in England, to all but the rich and powerful; but they were oppressions to all alike in India, and probably rich natives more than any others felt them. Some of the most inequitable charges and decisions, delivered with party or personal feeling, and in terms illogical as well as offensive, have been delivered in England by English judges, without exciting much indignation, so strong have been the prejudice and pride of the English people in behalf of their laws, and those who administer them; but in India no such feelings were entertained, and the whole system of English jurisprudence, and its mode of administration, were regarded as barbarous and atrocious.

It was probably the intent of Hastings to keep Sir Elijah Impey in his interest, but he resolutely resolved to oppose the system of legal administration adopted by the learned judge. The governor stood firmly on the side of the people, and for once he received the unanimous support of his council. The judges served the council with writs to answer in court for their acts! Hastings ridiculed the summons, forcibly dismissed various persons wrongfully accused, and opposed the sword to the writs of the sheriff's officers. Hastings, however, contrived to avert a conflict between the crown and the company. Impey had £8000 a year as chief of the supreme court, Hastings offered him another £8000\* a

year as a judge in the service of the company, dismissible at the governor's pleasure; but the office was conferred on the condition, privately stipulated, that he would cease to assert the disputed powers of the supreme court. He accepted the bribe. Bengal was freed from the turmoil which had been created, and Hastings from the difficulty which it presented to his government.

For a short time a sort of truce had been formed between Hastings and Francis. Barwell promoted a peace between the two great opponents, because he wanted to leave India, and had pledged himself that he would not do so, if the result would place the governor in a minority. The truce did not last long; Francis was opposed to Impey, and was exasperated that his old enemy should have a new honour and splendid emolument conferred upon him, simply to prevent his doing mischief. Lord Macaulay justifies Hastings in buying off Impey's adverse power, seeing that it inflicted so much evil upon the inhabitants of Bengal, on the principle that justifies a man in paying a ransom to a pirate to obtain a release of captives. His lordship's reasoning and illustration are alike unhappy in this case. The conduct of Hastings was censurable. Where he believed punishment was deserved, he conferred honour. He bribed the judge either to forego what was due to law and justice, or to give up an abuse of power. To induce a judge by any means to forego what law and justice required would be clearly wrong; to induce him by a bribe to forego the improper use of his authority could hardly be less wrong. An appeal to the crown and the company was the obvious duty of Hastings, and if they refused to redress the evil, he should have resigned his government, on the ground that he could not as an honourable man administer it under the circumstances. Unhappily, it is too probable that Hastings, having little confidence in the wisdom of either crown or company, and no confidence at all in the integrity of the English cabinet, chose the way by which he might best serve himself, and serve Impey also, while he stopped the mischief. Francis found a good opportunity for damaging Hastings in this transaction, and it is difficult not to prefer the logic of the malignant accuser of the governor in this case to that of his eloquent defender. It is probable that Francis merely accepted the compromise effected by Barwell, to induce the latter to leave India. Such was the opinion of Hastings afterwards, and he indignantly charged Francis with the imputation of faithlessness and dishonour in this respect.

After various stormy meetings of council,

\* Lord Macaulay names this sum, Auber £6000.



Hastings inflicted an insult on Francis which was provoked, and probably deserved, but which Francis was unable to endure. The governor in a minute recorded on the consultations of the government, inserted the following expressions: "I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour." When the council rose, Francis placed a challenge in the hands of the governor, who accepted it. A duel took place, in which Francis was severely wounded. Hastings was kind, inquired daily for him, and desired permission to call and see him. Francis refused, acknowledging the politeness of the offer, but declining to meet Hastings any where except in council. When he did return to council, his implacable hatred still raged. Lord Macaulay gives Francis credit for patriotism; to whatever degree he cultivated that virtue, his conduct in India did not display it. His patriotism was never seen to less advantage than after his recovery from the wound inflicted by Hastings. At that juncture Hyder Ali, to whom reference has been repeatedly made on former pages, swept all before him, penetrating to Madras. The governor of that presidency proved himself incapable, and Hastings afforded many and fresh proofs of his genius by the way in which he encountered this vast peril. During all those efforts, so worthy of his great reputation, he was impeded by Francis, whose sulky and malevolent opposition never ceased, until at last, finding all his animosity powerless, and recoiling upon himself, he left India. Wheler, his coadjutor in opposition, tamed down into a quiet and acquiescent follower of Hastings, who was thus left as a sovereign whose sway was undisputed, to govern Bengal, and direct the affairs of India generally.

While such were the distractions and vicissitudes in the council, events were taking place in every direction requiring unanimity and energy. No doubt the governor-general, if not obstructed by either a majority in the council or by an obstinate minority, who consumed time uselessly, and impeded public business, would have exercised an efficient control everywhere. As it was, he proved equal to every emergency.

During 1775 Oude was in a state of perpetual turmoil; the nabob squandered the resources of the state in folly and debauchery, and left public affairs to his chief minister—an enemy of the English, without whose support the nabob could not stand. The king of Delhi constituted the nabob his vizier, as his predecessor had been—this was supposed to have

been a spontaneous act of the Mogul. After his appointment to the dignity of vizier, the nabob became worse than before, both in his personal conduct and his government. Assassinations of some of the most distinguished persons in his dominions were laid to his account; murders were committed in his presence by courtiers, men of equal rank being the victims. Nearly all the talented persons at the head of the civil and military services were treacherously slain or obliged to fly beyond the territory of Oude. Revolts of the troops and massacres repeatedly occurred. British officers were appointed to discipline the nabob's soldiers, which led to a conspiracy and wide-spread mutiny: some of the officers were slain by the mutineers, others escaped, many with wounds, while a portion of the officers succeeded in subduing their soldiers and restoring order.

Apprehensions of the projects of the French were very generally received at this period among the English in India. French officers were observed in various parts of the country as if suspiciously engaged. A report of this was made to the government. It was also stated that the force at Pondicherry was considerable, amounting to one thousand Europeans, and a nearly equal number of black soldiers.

The connection of the three presidencies under a governor-general worked well, and gave scope for the business talents and comprehensive plans of Hastings.

Ragoba and the Bombay government entered into negotiations under the advice of Hastings, which issued in his cession to the company of Bassein, Salsette, Jambooseer, and Orphad, with the Islands of Caranga, Canary, Elephanta, and Hog Island; thus affording to Bombay Island a security never before possessed. The Bombay government, in virtue of the treaty with Ragoba, received him when a fugitive in their territory, and assisted him with arms and men to regain his ascendancy as chief of the Mahratta nation. While embarked in this undertaking, orders arrived from the supreme council at Calcutta revoking everything done at Bombay, and in terms haughty and arrogant. This was the work of the majority of the council opposed to Hastings. The Calcutta council even sent an officer to Poonah to treat with the enemies of Ragoba, thus humiliating utterly the council of Bombay. Madras was ordered not to assist the policy initiated at Bombay. The measures of the Bengal council failed, and, after all, that factious body were compelled to commit the transaction of a treaty to the council of Bombay, which acted in conformity with the opinion of Hast-



ings. Still, so unsteady and inconsistent were the directions of the supreme council, that confusion and dishonour ensued; and much injury to the company's interests would certainly have happened had not the directors at home revoked the orders of the supreme council, and censured the whole of its conduct to that of Bombay.

In 1777 the French gained some ascendancy over the government of Poonah, in consequence of the continued feuds of the Bombay and Bengal councils. The arrogant spirits of Clavering and Francis wrought mischief everywhere. The conclusion of these diplomatic squabbles, and of the conflicts at the Mahratta capital, is thus briefly recorded by Auber:—"In March, 1778, a revolution broke out at Poonah in favour of Ragoba, in whose name a proclamation was issued for restoring peace and order. In July the Bombay council declared that the treaty concluded by Colonel Upton had been violated by the Durbar proceedings; and that they were consequently freed from its obligations. They also declared that measures had become imperatively necessary to defeat the intrigues of the French, who had been long exerting themselves in schemes hostile to the English.\* They proposed to place Ragoba in the regency at Poonah, and that he should conduct the government in the name of the Peishwa. This latter arrangement appeared to be in consonance with the views of the court of directors.† The necessary operations consequent upon this determination could not be commenced until the month of September. In October a treaty was concluded with Ragoba, by which the company were to assist him with four thousand troops to conduct him to Poonah."‡

The affairs of the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore still continued to give uneasiness to the company. Lord Pigot having assumed the government of Madras at the close of 1775, set about adjusting the relations between the nabob, the rajah, and the company; but jealousies between the civil and military officers as to their respective dignities embroiled the presidency in disputes, and delayed the execution of Lord Pigot's plans. His lordship's temper, however, was the greatest of all impediments to his projects. To such a length did he carry his idea of his own authority, and so arbitrary was he in his government, that at last the majority of the council arrested him. The admiral on the station demanded his release, in the king's name; the council refused with-

out the king's order. The supreme government at Calcutta supported the council of Madras. The death of Lord Pigot terminated the dispute. The English were unable to undertake almost anything at that time without violent discussions among themselves.

The conflicts between Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas, and the feuds among the Mahratta chiefs, in which the Bombay government was to some extent involved, led the council of Bengal to send troops overland to Bombay in 1778. Colonel Leslie, and this force, began their march on May 4th, but it proceeded so slowly, and with such little military judgment, that it was necessary to supersede the commander.

In November Captain Stuart seized the pass of Boru Ghaut, which opened the way to Poonah; it was held and fortified. He was speedily followed from Bombay by a considerable force, consisting of about four thousand men, of whom six hundred and thirty-nine were Europeans. On the 1st of January this army, under Colonel Egerton, began its march upon Poonah, but had to retreat fighting before a superior force. Fearful of a fresh attack, the English opened negotiations, but the Mahrattas refused unless Ragoba were surrendered. A disastrous treaty, consenting to everything the Mahrattas demanded, was the result of the expedition. This treaty the council of Bombay refused to ratify, and that of Calcutta approved of their policy. Brigadier Goddard, with a force from Bengal, reached Surat, and, being joined by Ragoba after the latter had made gallant and desperate efforts to effect the junction, the combined forces attacked the confederated Mahratta chiefs, and gained various decisive victories, until the close of the year 1780, when they went into quarters. So well did Hastings provide the sinews of war, that he remitted a crore of rupees to the governments of Madras and Bombay.

Many transactions took place in the interests of the company during the government of Hastings, of which little notice has been taken in history, but which had influence upon the general condition of the English territory. The treaty of the 2nd December, 1779, with the Rana of Gohud, is an instance. The Rana of Gohud, then described as "a chief south of Agra," made overtures for effecting a treaty with the company to secure himself against the Mahrattas. The terms were agreed to and signed on the 2nd of December. The company were to furnish a force for the defence of his country on paying 20,000 Muchildar rupees for each battalion of sepoys; nine-sixteenths of any acquisitions were to go to the company. The rana

\* Secret Letter from Bengal, April, 1778.

† Letter to Bombay, July, 1777.

‡ Vide Printed Treaties.



was to furnish ten thousand horse, whose combined operations might be determined on against the Mahrattas. Whenever peace took place between the company and the Mahrattas, the rana was to be included, and his present possessions, with the fort of Gwalior, were to be guaranteed to him.

As war was apprehended with France in 1778, Hastings made vast and skilful efforts to prepare the territories he governed against all contingencies, as he concluded that some alliances with native powers would be effected by the French. The declaration of war in London was sent by the secret committee of the court of directors, overland *via* Cairo, and orders were issued to the supreme council to reduce Pondicherry.

Mohammed Reza Khan now ceased to act as regent in Bengal, and the young nabob took upon himself the full responsibilities of his government.

Mr. Auber bears the following testimony to the labours of Hastings at this time:—“Mr. Hastings, in the midst of his other varied and important avocations, did not lose sight of the interests of science and literature. A copy of the Mohammedan laws had been translated by Mr. Anderson, under the sanction and patronage of the government, and sent home to the court, together with the Bengal grammar prepared by Messrs. Halhed and Wilkins, five hundred copies being taken by the government at thirty rupees a copy, as an encouragement to their labours. Mr. Wilkins\* was also supported in erecting and working a press for the purpose of printing official papers, &c. The Madrisa, or Mohammedan college, for the education of the natives, was established by the government. In order to open a communication by the Red Sea with Europe, the government built a vessel at Mocha, having been assured that every endeavour would be made to secure the privilege of despatches, with the company's seal, being forwarded with facility; the trade with Suez having been prohibited to all British subjects, on a complaint to the king's ministers by the Ottoman Porte.”

During the close of the year 1779 the Carnatic was seriously disturbed, and the cares of that province now fell upon the supreme council, although its immediate superintendence belonged to the Madras presidency. In 1780 struggles took place in which the existence of the company in the Madras presidency was seriously menaced. The great war with Hyder must form the subject of a separate chapter. It is here desirable to follow the general events of the government

\* Afterwards Sir Charles Wilkins, librarian to the court of directors.

of Mr. Hastings. The conflict with the Mysorean chief was too extensive and important to be brought within the records of a chapter so general in its subjects as the present. It may here, however, be observed that almost every occurrence connected with the management of affairs in Madras itself at this period, complicated the relations of that presidency to the Carnatic, and those of the supreme government to Hyder Ali and the Mahrattas. Indeed, the government of Madras seemed alike to set at defiance the directions of the supreme council of Calcutta, and of the court of directors in London. Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Whitehill, and Mr. Perring, the three principal members of the Madras council, set an example of insubordination. The first-named was governor, but, finding that his proceedings excited so much displeasure in Calcutta and in London, he resigned the government in January, 1780, and was succeeded in the presidential chair by Mr. Whitehill, the senior councillor. The party in the council to which these gentlemen belonged had, with other eccentric proceedings, abolished “the commission of circuit,” which had been established by the express orders of the directors, to prevent the hardship incurred by the rajahs and zemindars, in being obliged to have all their disputes adjudicated in the chief city of the presidency, however great the distance at which they resided.

M. Auber describes other freaks and absurdities of this party in the following terms:—“They had also entered into an agreement with Sitteram Rauze for renting the havilly lands for a term of ten years, and had appointed him dewan of the Vizianagram district, a measure which the directors considered to inflict a cruel and unnecessary degradation on his brother. They had likewise disposed of the Guntoor circar to the nabob for a term of ten years. This circar had, by treaty, been delivered to the company by Bazalet Jung in 1779, he receiving from them a permanent rent, equal to what his aumils had paid to him.” As to the effect of such conduct at home and at Calcutta, M. Auber adds:—“These proceedings were diametrically opposed to the orders of the directors. The motives and principles by which the parties had been governed in their adoption appeared so very questionable, that Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Whitehill, and Mr. Perring were dismissed the company's service;\* and on the 17th of January, 1781, Lord Macartney was appointed governor of Madras. His lordship, as was then customary, expressed his acknowledgment to the court of directors, and to the company, in a general court of pro-

\* Letter to Madras, 10th of January, 1781.



prietors. On the 18th of January, the proprietors being met to consider the conduct of Mr. Paul Benfield, Mr. Burke, as proprietor, delivered in a paper entitled, "Heads of Objections to be inquired into before Mr. Benfield should be allowed to return to India." Leave was ultimately granted for that purpose, by a vote of 368 to 302. The supreme government were equally opposed with the directors to the conduct of Mr. Whitehill. The government were represented to have countenanced the treaty concluded by that gentleman with Bazalet Jung, whether to the extent alleged by the Madras council was not apparent, but it was clear that orders had been subsequently sent from Bengal for relinquishing the circar. The Madras government were accused of pertinaciously refusing to obey such orders, and of retaining the circar in defiance of the peremptory instructions from Calcutta. On a previous occasion, in a matter connected with the nizam, the council at Fort St. George disputed the controlling power attempted to be exercised by the supreme government, and had expressed an opinion that the latter possessed only a negative power, and that confined to two points, viz., orders for declaring war, or for making treaties, and not a positive and compelling power, extending to all political affairs. Considerable jealousy had been created in the minds of Hyder and the Nizam by the treaty; both Bazalet Jung and Hyder manifested decided intentions of hostility."

Hyder made such demonstrations of hostility, and had such means of making that hostility formidable, that the supine council might have been awakened from their apathy in time to avert the terrible consequences about to spread like a devouring flame over the fair provinces of the presidency. The nabob of the Carnatic was still more supine, if possible, than the council: nothing was either performed or attempted by him to strengthen the hands of the Madras government, or in any way prepare himself for an encounter with his formidable foe. The nizam was able to afford to Hyder such a supply of French officers and troops ostensibly in his own service that it ought to have been an object of intense concern with the government of Madras, by negotiation or money, to prevent such a junction. No real efforts to accomplish so important an object were made, and when the moment arrived for action the

Mysorean adventurer was able to add to the elements of strength possessed by his vast and well-organized armies this new and most dangerous one of French troops led by officers skilful in engineering and artillery, and with all the prestige of being the best disciplined troops in Europe or in Asia. The difficulties of Hastings at this juncture pass description. The company's funds in India were exhausted; the servants of every grade were in arrears for pay; the exigencies of the war in the Carnatic were exorbitant; the petty rajahs were everywhere displaying symptoms of disaffection; the insubordinate polygars of Tanjore had gone over to Hyder Ali; the vizier and other powerful native princes were murmuring and at heart disloyal; the company was importunate for money; the councils of the presidencies despaired of finding means for the annual investment. Such was the condition of India in 1781-82.

It seems to be one of the strange conditions upon which providentially the English dominion in India has depended, that it should, after the most signal seasons of prosperity and triumph, be suddenly brought to the verge of ruin, and yet emerge from danger and disaster more glorious than ever. This has so often happened as to assume the appearance of a law, and challenge the investigation of statesmen. At the period to which reference is now made, such was the state of the English power in India. After all its prestige and glory, a wild and lawless man, thrown up by the ever surging sea of Indian life, put the empire founded by Clive and consolidated by Hastings in the utmost peril; and when successive victories rolled back the tide of his conquests, the pecuniary resources of the company in India were exhausted, the native chiefs were preparing to throw off the yoke of England, and the English themselves were weakened by dissensions in their presidential councils. The genius of Hastings retrieved affairs so desperate. Where his own hand could not reach, and his own mind direct, he nominated agents adapted to the work he desired to see accomplished. Had the appointment of the men, or the procuring and management of the means, been left, at this juncture, to either the councils in India or the directors at home, all had been lost.



## CHAPTER LXXXV.

GOVERNMENT OF HASTINGS (*Continued*)—HIS EFFORTS TO RETRIEVE THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE COMPANY IN INDIA—TRANSACTIONS WITH CHEYTE SING, THE VIZIER, THE BEGUMS OF OUDE, ETC.—CENSURES PRONOUNCED BY THE DIRECTORS AND THE ENGLISH PUBLIC.

For a time, after the occurrence of the events recorded in the last chapter, Hastings directed his whole attention to finance, and made efforts of the most ingenious but daring nature to provide funds for the government.

Few of the transactions by which large sums of money were brought to the coffers of the company have been more canvassed than the expulsion of Cheyte Sing, Rajah of Benares. Lord Macaulay describes Hastings as having deliberately meditated a robbery (on behalf of the company) on this prince, whom the same authority represents as having paid regularly his tribute up to 1780-1. His lordship is very severe upon Hastings for treating a sovereign rajah in the manner he did, and for demanding money for the company for which there was no legitimate claim upon the rajah. His lordship in this case, as in almost every other to which he refers in his essays upon Clive and Warren Hastings (which are in fact essays upon Indian affairs during their governments), follows Mill, and he does so even when the means of correcting Mill by more authentic sources of information were abundantly open to him. The gist of the affair is in the real relation held by the rajah to the English government, and his own actual rights, whether implied by the title of rajah or the power or authority which he exercised. The truth was, the rajah perceived with pleasure the difficulties by which the company was surrounded, and hoped out of the dismemberment of its territories to derive for himself a sovereignty to which he had no claim. He had engaged to assist the English during the struggles with the Mahrattas and Hyder, by a body of cavalry,—a force of which Lord Macartney declared in his correspondence with the directors, that when he assumed the government of Madras in 1781, the presidency was totally destitute. The English were especially deficient in that military arm, and relied generally for support in it upon their native allies. The people of Benares being, as compared with Lower Bengal, warlike—but by no means so warlike as Lord Macaulay describes them, and as the inhabitants of Oude, Rohilkund, Delhi, and the north and north-west districts generally are—it was reasonable for the English to expect that the rajah would keep faith with them in furnishing

cavalry contingents. This he did not do. He was also expected to aid the general government in any extraordinary crisis, as the very existence of his position as a prince depended upon the protection of the English. Cheyte Sing thought otherwise. He had no disposition to lend them aid in their hour of peril, and counted upon their necessity as his opportunity. Hastings was not a governor to be so treated. He determined that Benares should afford its full proportion of assistance to the general want, and he resolved to make his highness, the rajah, an example to other rajahs of the reality of English power, and the necessity of rendering a full, efficient, and zealous support to the supreme government—of, in fact, sharing its dangers as well as enjoying its protection. The governor-general accordingly proceeded to Benares, and after undergoing desperate perils, expelled the rajah and seized the revenue. The light in which the transaction is placed by Auber is sustained by the documents upon the authority of which an historical record must be based. It is with singular brevity recorded by him in the following terms:—

“Under the treaty concluded with Sujah-ad-Dowlah in August, 1765, it was stipulated that Bulwunt Sing, a tributary of the vizier, and Rajah of Benares, should be continued in that province. On Sujah-ad-Dowlah's death in 1775, a treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow, with his successor, Asoff-ul-Dowlah, by which all the districts dependent on Rajah Cheyte Sing, the successor of Bulwunt Sing, were transferred in full sovereignty to the company, an arrangement which had apparently given great satisfaction to Cheyte Sing and his family.

“When intelligence reached India, in 1778, of the war with France, Spain, and America, the supreme government were constrained to devise every means to augment the financial resources of the company, in order to meet the unavoidable increase of charge. As the rajah's provinces derived the advantage of the company's protection, to whom he had, in point of fact, become tributary, he was called upon to aid in the general exigency. He very reluctantly assented to a contribution of five lacs. This indisposition created an unfavourable impression on the mind of the government.



"Having been again applied to for aid during the war in the Carnatic, in the prosecution of which the government of Bengal had drained their treasury in supplies to Madras, he evinced a decided disinclination to come forward; and although he promised to contribute some aid in cavalry, not one man was forthcoming. These and other circumstances arising out of the deputation of a party from the rajah to Calcutta, determined Mr. Hastings to make known his mind to Cheyte Sing, for which purpose he proceeded to Benares on his route to meet the vizier, where he arrived on the 14th of August, 1781. It was the rajah's wish to have paid the governor-general a visit that evening, but he desired it might be postponed until a wish to that effect was communicated to the rajah.

"In the interim, the governor-general caused a paper to be forwarded to Cheyte Sing, recapitulating the points upon which he felt it necessary to animadvert. The reply of the rajah was so unsatisfactory, that orders were given to Mr. Markham, the resident, on the 15th, at ten at night, to place him in arrest the following morning: should opposition arise, he was to await the arrival of two companies of sepoys. Mr. Markham, with the troops, the following morning executed his orders. The rajah addressed a letter to Mr. Hastings, asking 'what need there was for guards?' He was the governor-general's slave.' In consequence of the desire of the rajah, Mr. Markham proceeded to visit him; previous to his arrival, large bodies of armed men had crossed the river from Ramnagur. Unfortunately, the two companies who were with the resident had taken no ammunition with them. They were suddenly attacked by the assembled body of armed men and fired upon; at this moment the rajah made his escape, letting himself down the steep banks of the river, by turbans tied together, into a boat which was waiting for him. Those who effected his escape followed him. Of the two companies commanded by Lieutenant Stalker few remained alive, and those were severely wounded; Lieutenants Stalker, Scott, and Simes lying within a short distance of each other. The rajah fled from Ramnagur with his zenana to Lateefgur, a strong fort ten miles from Chunar, accompanied by every member of the family who could claim any right of succession to the raj.

"In this state of affairs, Mr. Hastings selected Baboo Assaum Sing, who had been dewan under Bulwunt Sing, to take charge of the revenues, in quality of naib, until it should be legally determined to whom the revenues belonged. The governor went to

Chunar, from whence requisitions were issued for succour from all quarters. Little aid could be effectually given, as the whole of the country was in arms, the provinces of Benares, Ramnagur, and Pateeta being in a state of war. Troops ultimately arrived under Major Popham from Cawnpore; the exertions and gallantry of that officer rescued the zemindary of Benares from the power and influence of the disaffected rajah and his adherents. His last strong fortress of Bejiegur, from which he had escaped, was reduced and brought under subjection to the company. Baboo Narrain, a grandson of Bulwunt Sing, was proclaimed rajah in the room of Cheyte Sing."

This statement, supported by all existing documents of the rajah's position, prerogatives, and conduct, and the ground on which the claims of the governor-general rested, does not agree with the account given by Mill, upon whose authority it is obvious Lord Macaulay solely rests his estimate of the conduct of Hastings. Mr. Mill, assuring his readers of the sacred and indefeasible rights of the rajah, says:—"Whether till the time at which Benares became an appanage of the Subah of Oude, it had ever been governed through the medium of any of the neighbouring viceroys, or had always paid its revenue immediately to the imperial treasury, does not certainly appear. With the exception of coining money in his own name—a prerogative of majesty, which, as long as the throne retained its vigour, was not enfeebled by communication, and that of the administration of criminal justice, which the nabob had withdrawn, the Rajah of Benares had always, it is probable, enjoyed and exercised all the powers of government within his own dominions."

With views based upon such representations, Lord Macaulay would naturally describe any demands for assistance made by Hastings, beyond the ordinary tribute, as a robbery. Professor Wilson has, with his usual research, examined the statements of Mill, and gives the following confutation:—"This is an adoption of one of those errors upon which the charge against Mr. Hastings in regard to his relations with Cheyte Sing was founded, and which commences with the second report of the select committee, who talk of 'the expulsion of a rajah of the highest rank from his dominions.' In point of fact, however, no rajah had enjoyed and exercised the powers of government in the province of Benares since the middle of the eleventh century, at the latest. At the period of the Mohammedan conquest, it was part of the kingdom of Kanoj. It was annexed to



Delhi by the arms of Kutteb, early in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth was included in the Mohammedan kingdom of Jonpur. In the reign of Akbar it was comprised in the subah of Allahabad, and in that of Aurungzebe it was comprehended in that of Oude. In all this time no mention is made of a Rajah of Benares. The title originated in the beginning of the eighteenth century, or A.D. 1730, when Mansa Ram, zemindar of Gangapoor, having, in the distracted state of affairs, added largely to his authority, obtained a sunnud of rajah from Mohammed Shah of Delhi—a mere honorary title, conferred then, as is it now, by the British government, without any suspicion of its implying princely power or territorial dominion. Mansa Ram procured the title for his son, Bulwunt Sing, who succeeded him in 1740; so that even the title was only forty years old at the time of Cheyte Sing's removal. It had never conferred independence, for the rajah had still remained a zemindar, holding under the soubahdar of Oude. It is true, that the minutes of council of various dates speak of the rajah as a sort of king, tributary, but reigning in his own right, and by the position of his supposed kingdom, calculated to be a valuable feudatory or ally of the British government. Some of this was merely vagueness of expression, some of it ignorance. The word rajah seems to have imposed even upon Hastings; certainly it did upon Clavering and his party; and language was used in allusion to Cheyte Sing, which exposed Hastings to the charge of contradiction and inconsistency. There is no vagueness or inconsistency, however, in the document upon which Cheyte Sing's whole power and right depended. The sunnud of 1776, granted to the rajah by the governor and council, and which, it is to be observed, 'causes all former sunnuds to become null and void;' confers no royalties, acknowledges no hereditary rights, fixes no perpetual limit to the demands of the supreme government; but appoints him zemindar, aumcen, and fougedar of Benares and other districts. All these terms imply delegated and subordinate offices, and recognise in him nothing more than receiver of the rents, and civil and commercial judge. In the kabooleat, or assent to this sunnud, Cheyte Sing acknowledges the sovereignty of the company, and promises to pay them a certain sum, the estimated net revenue, and to preserve peace and order. Whatever, therefore, may be the fluctuating and contradictory language of the minutes of council, there is not the slightest pretext for treating the zemindar of Benares as a sovereign, however subordinate or tributary, to which he held whatever power he enjoyed. It is true that the genu-

ineness of this document was disputed by the prosecutors; and they affirmed that the sunnud was altered in compliance with the representation of Cheyte Sing, who objected to the insertion of the term 'muchulka,' and the clause annulling all former sunnuds. They could not prove, however, that any other sunnud was ever executed; and whatever might at one time have been the disposition of the council to accede to the rajah's wishes, it does not appear that any actual measure ensued. Even, however, if the omissions had been made, of which there is no proof, it is not pretended that any clause, exempting the rajah for ever from all further demands, was inserted; and this was the only material point at issue."\*

It was obvious that, in the mode which Hastings adopted in carrying out the punishment inflicted upon Cheyte Sing, and in the extent to which it was pushed, he was influenced by personal resentment. Cheyte Sing had deserved resentment; but Hastings carried it out vindictively. There can be no doubt that his policy and sense of justice were independent of his vengeful feeling, but that gave a bitterness to all he did in the transaction.

"The spirit which Hastings manifested towards Cheyte Sing was so intensely bitter as almost to force an inquiry whether the public delinquency of this man could be the sole cause of the governor-general's hatred. This is a question which could not have been satisfactorily answered had not Hastings himself afforded the means. In enumerating the crimes of the rajah, Hastings accuses him of having entertained an intention to revolt. 'This design,' says he, 'had been greatly favoured by the unhappy divisions of our government, in which he presumed to take an open part. It is a fact, that when these had proceeded to an extremity bordering on civil violence, by an attempt to wrest from me my authority, in the month of June, 1777, he had deputed a man named Sumboonaut, with an express commission to my opponent, and the man had proceeded as far as Moorshedabad, when, hearing of the change of affairs which had taken place at the presidency, he stopped, and the rajah recalled him.'† Here, then, is the key, furnished by Hastings himself, to the feelings under which he carried on his proceedings against Cheyte Sing. While the contest between himself and General Claver-

\* Minutes of Evidence, p. 60.

† Hastings's *Narrative*, printed in the Appendix to the Supplement to the Second Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Administration of Justice in India, 1782; and also in the Minutes of Evidence on the Trial of Hastings, vol. i.



ing was raging, the presumptuous rajah had ventured to dispatch a messenger to the opponent of the man who was eventually to be master of his fortunes. For four years the hatred engendered by this act had burned in Hastings's heart, when an opportunity occurred for gratifying at once the claims of public justice and of private revenge. Such an opportunity Hastings was not the man to pass by. It is not necessary to ascribe the whole of his proceedings with regard to Cheyte Sing to personal hatred. Independently of this feeling, he would probably have called upon the rajah for assistance towards carrying on the war, and he would have been justified; he would probably have visited his numerous failures with some punishment; and in this, too, he would have been justified: but in the absence of the dark passion which had so long rankled in his breast, he would have proceeded with more calmness, more dignity, and more regard to the courtesy which the rank and position of the zemindar demanded. To humble to the dust the man who had offended him was a triumph which it was not in the nature of Hastings to forego, when circumstances threw in his way the opportunity of enjoying it. He set his foot on the neck of his enemy, and was happy.

"With the explanation afforded by himself, the conduct of Hastings towards Cheyte Sing appears perfectly in accordance with his general character; but the indiscreet revelation of his feelings is remarkable, as being in striking opposition to that character. Disguise seemed to be natural to him. On all occasions he surrounded himself and his motives with mystery. Here is a striking exception. A degree of frankness, which few men in such a case would have manifested, for once marks a communication from Warren Hastings. How is this to be accounted for? By the strength of the passion which had waited years for gratification, and by the overwhelming sensation of triumph consequent on gratification when attained. Powerful must these feelings have been to overcome the caution of a man with whom concealment was not so much a habit as an instinct; which could induce him for once to lift the veil which on no other occasion was ever removed; which could lead him, unabashed and undismayed, to expose to the public eye motives and feelings of which the suggestions of the most ordinary prudence would have dictated the concealment—and this, too, at a time when, under the avowed consciousness that some parts of his proceedings required explanation, and under the humiliating sense of disappointment at the failure of his financial specula-

tions, he was seeking to disarm hostility by apology."\*

The conduct of Hastings throughout the unfortunate events at Benares was characterised not only by his usual courage, but by an amount of cool and dauntless fortitude, such as the world has seldom witnessed. When the disaster occurred to the two companies, Hastings, with about fifty soldiers, was shut up in the residency, which the mob surrounded, cutting off all communication. The too forward valour of some English officers with Hastings nearly brought on a conflict which would have probably issued in the destruction of his little garrison and of himself. The whole country for many miles around was in arms, and the insurrectionary spirit extended into Oude, the most turbulent part of India. Volunteers from Oude, from among the less warlike part of the population, especially hastened to join the Benares insurgents. The ruling class of Oude, the Mohammedans took little part in the disturbance, but the Brahminical devotees considered it a holy war, and nearly thirty thousand of them crossed the borders into the Benares province. Hastings, beleaguered in his little temporary fortress, not only remained perfectly calm, but acted with the cool assurance and audacity of one in a position to dictate. The fugitive rajah sent to him, beseeching, in humiliating terms, pardon and friendship, but in the meantime made no efforts to withdraw the armed rabble that beset the governor. Hastings treated with haughty disdain the rajah's overtures. He contrived to send letters, placed in the ears of certain of the natives as ear-rings, to the nearest cantonments of the British army. The troops idolized Hastings, as all the English did, and officers and men made desperate and enthusiastie efforts to hasten to his rescue. Meanwhile, Hastings wrote with the greatest coolness despatches to his agents in connection with the negotiations then going on with the Mahrattas. These despatches show the most wonderful self-reliance and self-possession. While a multitude thundered at the gates of his residence, and bullets whistled around, this indomitable man wrote with as much collectedness as if sitting in his study at government house, or dictating a revenue minute in the council chamber. The efforts of the British troops soon turned the tide of affairs, the vast mob of armed fanatics melted away, and the liberated governor with wisdom, promptitude, and stern repression reduced to a perfect calm the anarchical elements that had raged so fiercely around him.

\* *History of the British Empire in India.* By Edward Thornton.



Cheyte Sing had placed himself beyond all hope of mercy while these events were passing. He was lifted up by the sight of the whole population of the province of Benares in arms, the thronging volunteers from Oude, and the preparation for revolt in Bchar, so that he threatened to "drive the white faces out of Bengal," and made high and peremptory demands upon Hastings. When he saw the feeble resistance made by multitudes of his co-religionists to a few English soldiers and sepoy commanded by British officers, he became panic-struck, and fled, abandoning for ever the regions he had thrown into so sudden a convulsion. The result to the company was an increase of its revenue to the amount of £200,000 sterling per annum, and a more complete dominance in the regions that had so suddenly revolted. A quarter of a million sterling was found in the treasury of Cheyte Sing, which was distributed to the troops as prize money. When tidings of the occurrences at Benares reached the directors, the court passed a resolution that the treaty of 1775 confirmed in perpetuity to the company the zemindaree of Benares, that Cheyte Sing was to have the management of the province on paying a certain tribute; that the governor-general and council had recommended the rajah to maintain two thousand horse, but that in the opinion of the court there were no obligations resting upon Cheyte Sing to comply with that recommendation; that the conduct of the governor-general towards him while at Benares was improper, and that the imprisonment of his person was unwarrantable and highly impolitic, and would probably tend to weaken that confidence in the moderation and justice of the English government, which it was desirable the princes of India should feel. These tidings reached the governor-general just as he had concluded a glorious peace with Hyder, and when flushed with the success of all his enterprises, he was unlikely to endure the language of censure with his usual good temper and self-command. He at once wrote a respectful but indignant despatch to the directors, a few extracts from which will at once show the merits of the whole question as they appeared to Hastings, and the views which he took of the policy and proceedings of the directors. He considered the judgment pronounced to have issued from a party in the directory, under the influence no doubt of the cabinet, which, anxious to grasp the patronage of India, laboured incessantly to prejudice the minds of the English public against the company's servants, believing that such prejudice would ultimately be directed to the company itself.

Hastings does not express so much in the language he employed, but his allusions and tone convey it:—"I understand that these resolutions regarding Cheyte Sing were either published or intended for publication; the authority from whence they proceed leads to the belief of the fact. Who are the readers? Not the proprietors alone, whose interest is immediately concerned in them, and whose approbation I am impelled, by every motive of pride and gratitude, to solicit, but the whole body of the people of England, whose passions have been excited on the general subject of the conduct of their servants in India; and before them I am arraigned and prejudged of a violation of the national faith in acts of such complicated aggravation, that, if they were true, no punishment short of death could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public have sustained in them."

M. Auber,\* condensing the letter of Hastings, thus describes and quotes its contents:—"With respect to the two thousand horse, it was not stipulated that Cheyte Sing should furnish any given number, but that what were maintained should be for the defence of the general state. He denied that Cheyte Sing was bound by no other tie than the payment of his tribute, for he was bound by the fealty of obedience to every order of the government which he served, his own letters being referred to as affording proofs. He denied that Cheyte Sing was a native prince of India, for he was the son of a collector of the revenue of that province, which his acts, and the misfortunes of his master, enabled him to convert to his own permanent and hereditary possession. 'The man whom you have just ranked among the princes of India will be astonished when he hears it—at an elevation so unlooked-for; nor less at the independent rights which he will not know how to assert, unless the example you have thought it consistent with justice, however opposite to policy, to show, of becoming his advocate against your own interests, should inspire any of your own servants to be his advisers and instructors.' Mr. Hastings referred to his narrative as explanatory of all the circumstances, and then dwelt upon the injury likely to arise from the support of a native against the government; remarking, 'it is now a complete period of eleven years since I first received the nominal charge of your affairs; in the course of that time I have had invariably to contend, not only with ordinary difficulties, but with such as most naturally arose from the opposition of those very powers

\* *Rise and Progress of British Power in India*, vol. i. chap. xi. pp. 642—644.



from whom I primarily derived my authority, and which were required for the support of it. My exertions, though applied to an unwearied and consistent line of action, have been occasional and desultory; yet I please myself with the hope that in the annals of your dominions which shall be written after the extinction of recent prejudice, this term of its administration will appear not the least conducive to the interests of the company, nor the least reflective of the honour of the British name. Had sufficient support been given, what good might have been done! You, honourable sirs, can attest the patience and temper with which I have submitted to all the indignities heaped upon me in a long service. It was the duty of fidelity which I essentially owed to it; it was the return of gratitude which I owed, even with the sacrifice of life, had that been exacted, to the company, my original masters and most indulgent patrons. There was an interval during which my authority was wholly destroyed; but another was substituted, and that, though irregular, was armed with the public belief of an influence invariably upholding it, which gave it a vigour scarcely less effectual than that of a constitutional power. Besides, your government had no external danger to agitate and discover the looseness of its composition.

“The case is now widely different; while your executive was threatened by wars with the most formidable powers of Europe, added to your Indian enemies, and while you confessedly owed its preservation to the seasonable and vigorous exertions of this government, you chose that season to annihilate its constitutional powers. You annihilated the influence of its executive members. You proclaimed its annihilation—you have substituted no other, unless you suppose it may exist, and can be effectually exercised in the body of your council at large, possessing no power of motion, but an inert submission to your commands. It therefore remains for me to perform the duty which I had assigned myself, as the final purpose of this letter, to declare, as I now most formally do, that it is my desire that you will be pleased to obtain the early nomination of a person to succeed me in the government of Fort William; to declare that it is my intention to resign your service so soon as I can do it without prejudice to your affairs, after the allowance of a competent time for your choice of a person to succeed me; and to declare that if, in the intermediate time, you shall proceed to order the restoration of Rajah Cheyte Sing to the zemindaree, from which he was dispossessed for crimes of the greatest enormity, and your

council shall resolve to execute the order, I will instantly give up my station and the service. I am morally certain that my successor, whoever he may be, will be allowed to possess and exercise the necessary power of his station, with the confidence and support of those who, by their choice of him, will be interested in his success.”\*

The affairs of the Madras government led to various differences between it and the supreme government; the directors supported the Madras council against Hastings, objecting to the appointment of Mr. R. J. Sullivan by the governor-general to Hyderabad, a person whom he had nominated solely on account of his abilities and qualifications. Finally, the court supported Mr. Bristow at Oude, in opposition to the governor-general. These circumstances led Mr. Hastings to address the court in the following terms, in a letter written after that already quoted had been dispatched:—“At whatever period your decision may arrive, may the government fall into the hands of a person invested with the powers of the office, not disgraced, as I have been, with an unsubstantial title, without authority, and with a responsibility without the means of discharging it. May he, at least, possess such a portion of exclusive control as may enable him to interpose with effect on occasions which may tend to the sacrifice of your political credit.”†

In reference to Mr. Sullivan, he, in a letter of still later date, observed:—“Among the many mortifications to which I have been continually subjected, there is none which I so severely feel as my concern in the sufferings of those whom my selection for the most important trusts in your service has exposed to persecution, and to censures, fines, deprivations, and dismissal from home. It is hard to be loaded with a weighty responsibility without power, to be compelled to work with instruments which I cannot trust, and to see the terrors of high authority held over the heads of such as I myself employ in the discharge of my public duties.”‡

From the period when he heard of the disapproval of his conduct in reference to Cheyte Sing, Hastings was discontented, and his letters constantly breathe a sense of injury. He felt that his great services were not appreciated. Alluding, in the letter last quoted, to the helplessness of the other presidencies, and to the fact that he had saved India, he remarked:—“We have supported the other presidencies, not by scanty and ineffectual supplies, but by an anxious anticipation of all

\* Letter to Court, 20th of March, 1783.

† October, 1783.

‡ November, 1783.



their wants, and by a most prompt and liberal relief of them. We have assisted the China trade, and have provided larger investments from the presidency than it has ever furnished in any given period of the same length, from the first hour of its establishment to the present, and ample returns of wealth have been sent to England at a time when all the company's possessions in India were bearing with accumulated weight on Bengal for support against native and European enemies."

He complained bitterly of the miserable state of affairs in Oude, which he attributed to the impolicy of the company interfering with his measures.

The nature of the differences between the governor-general and the Madras government, the way in which they proceeded, and their influence upon the ultimate retirement of Hastings, are thus summed up by Edward Thornton:—"Between the governor-general and Lord Macartney there had never been much cordiality of feeling, and the difficulties in which the government of Madras was placed tended to multiply the points of difference. The governor-general had a plan for surrendering to the nizam the Northern Circars, in consideration of a body of cavalry to be furnished by that prince. This was opposed by Lord Macartney, and was never carried into effect. Lord Macartney had, with much difficulty, obtained from the Nabob of Arcot an assignment of the revenues of the Carnatic for the support of the war. This was disapproved by the government of Bengal, and the assignment ordered to be rescinded. Before these orders were received at Madras, orders of a contrary character arrived from the court of directors. The government of Bengal, however, stubbornly refused to yield, and Lord Macartney was equally immovable. The treaty with Tippoo Sultan afforded other grounds of difference. It was disapproved by the government of Bengal, among other reasons, because it did not include the Nabob of Arcot; and a new ratification, declaring it to extend to that personage, was directed to take place. Lord Macartney again resisted; and had the governor-general possessed confidence in the stability of his own authority, some violent measures might have resulted from these disputes. But Hastings was now tottering in his seat—heavy charges were in circulation against him in England, and he had dispatched an agent (Major Scott) thither for the defence of his character and interests. The influence of Lord Macartney, at home appeared to be rising as that of Hastings was declining; he continued to exercise his authority without impediment, until, in consequence chiefly of

the revocation of the orders of the court of directors relating to the assignment from Mohammed Ali, he voluntarily relinquished it, and was ultimately appointed to succeed to the office of governor-general."

When Hastings appointed Major Scott as his agent, he intimated to the directors his having done so, and at the same time declared to them that he "would suffer no person whatever to perform any act in his name that could be construed to imply a resignation of his authority, protesting against it, as on former occasions, as most unwarrantable."

Out of the transactions at Benares arose differences with Oude. The nabob vizier had so badly governed his dominions, or so faithlessly fulfilled the duties of alliance, that the insurrection in Benares derived great importance, and caused great danger by the number of his subjects that joined the masses of the insurgents. Hastings was inflamed with anger, and determined to make the nabob pay dearly for any damage caused by his neglect. Unfortunately for the nabob himself, he chose this critical juncture to urge the withdrawal of the British troops from Oude, which his father and himself had engaged the English to place there. His real object was not the removal of the troops, but as it was policy on the part of the English to keep a force in Oude, he concluded that they would still do so, even if he violated the treaty, and refused to pay for them. Hastings saw through this, and remonstrated, demanding the payment of all arrears, and the regular disbursement of the stipulated subsidy. The nabob declared that he had no money, and that his kingdom would not endure further taxation. Hastings reminded him that if his revenues were exhausted, the fault lay in the extravagance and debauchery of which the nabob had set so bad an example to his people, and hinted that if a native ruler could not make ends meet in Oude, the English could; but that the latter would never suffer Oude to be overrun by the Mahrattas, as would be the case almost as soon as the English troops disappeared, neither would he impose the cost of preserving that frontier of the British territory from foreign enemies. Oude should bear the burden of its own defenses. The vizier nabob sought an interview with Hastings. He proceeded to Chunar to meet the governor-general, and arrange with him as to the payment of the troops, which, according to treaty, he was bound to maintain. The governor-general was not now satisfied, but increased his demands, on the grounds of the nabob's duty to defend the empire, the protection of which he enjoyed, and on the ground, also, that his previous delinquencies deserved punishment.



This interview between the governor-general and vizier took place on the 11th of September, 1781, and they remained for a fortnight in the picturesque fortress, discussing the condition of India, and of Oude especially; but still more especially debating the means by which the British treasury at Calcutta might be furnished with money. It was finally arranged that the nabob should pay a large sum to meet the present emergencies of the English, and, on the other hand, he was to be spared the stated expense of a large portion of the British contingent, then stationed in his dominions. The infantry brigade, and three regiments of cavalry, were to be withdrawn, a very large saving to the annual expenditure of the nabob's government. One regiment of sepoys (infantry) was to be stationed at Lucknow, but the charge to the nabob was not to exceed 25,000 rupees per mensem. The army at Cawnpore was to be steadily kept up to the strength prescribed by the treaty of 1773. All British officers, and all English pensioners upon the state of Oude, whatever their claims, were to be withdrawn. The nabob was also to resume certain jaghires, of which the English had previously possessed themselves, the united value of which was very considerable. On his part the nabob consented immediately to supply fifty-five lacs of rupees to the company, and subsequently twenty lacs in entire liquidation of the debt due by him to the company. On the 25th of September the vizier re-entered his capital, gloomy and dissatisfied. Every trick of negotiation to which he had resorted had been turned against him. Hastings had foiled his most cunning vakeels and subordinates with their own weapons. The conduct of Hastings in these negotiations has been much censured. The English were bound by treaty to Fuzzul Oola Khan, the Rohilla chief, who had some years before protracted the war in that country. The chief had stipulated to place at the service of the English government two or three thousand men "according to his ability." Hastings now demanded five thousand, but reduced finally the mandate to three thousand cavalry, which the khan pleaded that he did not possess, but would send two thousand cavalry, all he had, and one thousand infantry. This offer was considered contumacious. It is possible that Hastings believed it to be so, but the grounds of suspicion are strong that he was anxious for a quarrel, in order to hand over the jaghires of the khan to the nabob, as compensation for the ready money required from the latter to meet the exigencies of the Bengal treasury, then drained of its resources by its supplies to the other presidencies in their dangerous mismanagement and desperate

wars. At all events, the lands of Fuzzul Oola were made over upon paper to the vizier, on the ostensible ground that the khan had broken the treaty. Fuzzul Oola had no doubt in various ways departed from its strict letter, but the pretext or reason announced for his deposition was his refusal to supply the military force agreed upon. Hastings had actually no wish that this concession to the vizier should be of use to him. He took means to impede the execution of this clause of the treaty with the nabob, while he was actually making it; and ultimately he frustrated its fulfilment, accepting from Fuzzul Oola a fine as a substitute for confiscation.

The resumption of the jaghires by the nabob involved the ruin of his mother and grandmother, called the begums. These princesses were immensely rich, and Hastings believed that the property they held had been improperly conferred upon them by the previous nabob—that, in fact, it belonged to the reigning prince. However that might have been, the English had, by treaty, recognised the rights of the begum mother both to her jaghires and her treasures. So ostensibly was this recognition made, that when the nabob had previously sought to plunder his relations, the English government interfered for the protection of the mother, on the ground of treaty obligation, while only remonstrating with the vizier for his treatment of the elder lady. The nabob was very desirous of obtaining the wealth, but shrank from the odium of entirely dispossessing the royal ladies. He suggested to Hastings the propriety of leaving them in possession of their jaghires, and of accepting their treasures instead. Hastings decreed that they should lose all. This stern, hard, and un pitying decree was executed, but not until after a gallant resistance on the part of the retainers of the royal ladies. Their affairs were in the hands of two eunuchs: these, with other of the begum adherents, were incarcerated, loaded with irons. Lord Macaulay says that torture was also applied; but this is not borne out by fact. He quotes a letter written by the British resident to the officer in charge of them, to allow the nabob's agents to inflict corporal punishment upon them. But this, as Thornton shows, was never executed, and probably never intended to be so. That author, more severe on Hastings than most historians who have animadverted upon his misdeeds, conjectures that the order was intended to act merely *in terrorem*, so as to induce the incarcerated men to comply with the requisitions of their persecutors. Torture, as the term is employed, was not applied; but great severity was inflicted. Hastings justified



his conduct throughout this last class of transactions by the allegation that the begums were enemies of British power in India, that they abetted Cheyte Sing, and assisted the insurrection in Benares. When public discussion was raised in England concerning his conduct towards the princes of Oude, Sir Elijah Impey suggested to him the importance of supporting the allegation of political intrigue against the begums by affidavits. Hastings gladly availed himself of this suggestion, and of the active services of Sir Elijah in taking the depositions. These were rendered in a remarkable manner. The judge hurried off to the provinces which had been the scenes of the alleged misconduct of the begums, and took the affidavits in the forms of Mohammedan, Brahminical, and Christian attestation, according to the religion of the witnesses. A vast pile of documents, most damnatory to the begums, was thus procured; nor would there have been any difficulty in obtaining any number of sworn testimonies which the governor deemed necessary to his object. It does not appear, however, that Hastings countenanced any methods to obtain false testimony, and it is possible that he credited the evidence upon which he made the allegations originally. The facts contained in the affidavits were at the time notorious, although they were years after denied in the British parliament by men who were seeking to ruin Hastings for the means he employed to save the Indian empire. Public opinion in England treated the whole affair as an imposture—a corrupt contrivance between the judge and the governor to bolster up a case from first to last guilty and disgraceful.

Another circumstance connected with the interview between the vizier and the governor-general at Chunar has been made the occasion of severe reflections upon the latter. The nabob offered his excellency a present of ten lacs of rupees; he accepted it, and passed the money to the company's account.\* This, however, he did not make known to the company for some months after, which Lord Macaulay considers as a ground for suspicion as to the integrity of his motives. Mr. Thornton attributes the concealment to the love of mystery with which he thinks Hastings invariably enveloped all his transactions. Motives of policy probably induced the temporary concealment; but Hastings never intended to apply it to his own use. He, however, felt that the close of his power was approaching, that public prejudice in England was fast rising to a dangerous pitch against

the company's servants in India, and that he, probably, would be made the scape-goat, and he was anxious to secure this sum for his own defence upon his return to England, if the directors could be induced to concede it. Possibly this circumstance had some influence in the delay which attended his communication to the company, that this sum had been paid to their account. He, at last, in a letter to the secret committee, asked permission to keep it. This they refused. His mortification was intense, for he was not rich, and no governor had ever enriched his sovereign by his measures, in any age, as Warren Hastings had enriched the Indian treasury of the company. Like Clive, he had saved India for them, and they grudged him both the glory and what he considered equitable pecuniary reward. It was from Patna, in January, 1782, that he addressed the court on the subject of this donation in the following letter:—"I accepted it without hesitation, and gladly, being entirely destitute both of means and credit, whether for your service or the relief of my own necessities. It was made, not in specie, but in bills. What I have received has been laid out in the public service, the rest shall be applied to the same account. The nominal sum is ten lacs of rupees, Oude currency. As soon as the whole is completed, I shall send you a faithful account of it, resigning the disposal of it entirely to the pleasure of your honourable court. If you shall adjudge the disposal to me, I shall consider it as the most honourable apportionment and reward of my labours, and I wish to owe my fortune to your bounty. I am now in my fiftieth year: I have passed thirty-one years in your service. My conscience allows me boldly to claim the merit of zeal and integrity, nor has fortune been unpropitious to their exertions. To these qualities I bound my pretensions. I shall not repine if you shall deem otherwise of my services; nor ought your decision, however it may disappoint my hope of a retreat adequate to the consequence and elevation of the office which I now possess, to lessen my gratitude for having been so long permitted to hold it, since it has, at last, permitted me to lay up a provision with which I can be contented in a more humble station."

On the 22nd of May, from Calcutta, he again wrote, accounting for the money which he had received for the company, and applied to its use, from the month of October, 1780, to August, 1781, amounting to nineteen lacs sixty-four thousand rupees (nearly £200,000). Unfortunately, the ship *Lively*, by which this letter was intended to have been dispatched to Europe, was delayed, and necessarily the

\* He had previously acted in a similar manner in the case of Cheyte Sing.



letter also, which turned out to the subsequent disadvantage of the writer.

On the 15th of January, 1783, the directors wrote to the governor-general, stating that they were prevented, by a prohibitory act of parliament, from applying the ten lacs in the way he requested. The directors may have so interpreted "the regulation act;" but there was no claim which hindered their giving the money to Hastings: they chose to accept it themselves. The answer of the directors was an evasion and a mean one. In Gleig's *Life of Hastings* a letter is published addressed by him to his agent, Major Scott, in which the following passage sets forth fully the views and feelings of the writer on this matter:—"I am neither a prude nor a hypocrite. Had I succeeded, as I had reason to expect, in the original objects of my expedition, I should have thought it, perhaps, allowable to make some provision for myself when I had filled the company's treasury; but I am disappointed. I have added, indeed, a

large income to the company's revenue, and if Mr. Middleton (resident at Lucknow) does his duty, I have provided for the early payment of the debt due from the nabob vizier to the company. But these are not acquisitions of *éclat*. Their immediate influence is not felt, and will not be known at all until long after the receipt of these despatches. It will be known that our receipts from Benares were suspended for three months, and during as long a time at Lucknow. It will be known that the pay and charges of the temporary brigade have been thrown upon the company, and that all the nabob's pensioners have been withdrawn; but the effect of my more useful arrangement, thanks to Mr. Middleton, yet remains to be accomplished. I return to an empty treasury, which I left empty. I will not suffer it to be said that I took more care of my own interests than of the public, nor that I made a sacrifice of the latter to the former."\*

## CHAPTER LXXXVI.

GOVERNMENT OF HASTINGS (*Concluded*)—TREATY WITH THE MAHRATTAS—INSUBORDINATION OF THE COUNCILS OF BOMBAY AND MADRAS—DISSENSIONS IN SUPREME COUNCIL—HASTINGS RESIGNS THE GOVERNMENT—SCHEMES OF THE MAHRATTAS—PREPARATIONS FOR THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DEPARTURE—HASTINGS LEAVES INDIA.

WHILE Hastings was at Chunar, communications reached him from Madajee Scindiah, which led to a better feeling with the Mahrattas. Colonel Muir was ordered by Hastings to form a treaty with Scindiah, which he effected on the basis of instructions sent by Hastings on the 13th of October. That chief acted as mediator between the English and Hyder Ali, but the time was not ripe for the full development of events between the powers of Mysore and Calcutta. Peace, however, was concluded with the Mahrattas by the treaty of Salbey, May 17th, 1782,\* Scindiah having been the means of bringing to pass this desirable event. Ragoba, concerning whom the conflict arose, had an allowance of 25,000 rupees per month guaranteed to him. By the treaty of Salbey, the Peishwa bound himself on behalf of the whole of the Mahratta states not to tolerate the erection of factories by any European nations except the English. The two men who held at that time chief power among the Mahrattas were Scindiah and Nana Furnavese, the prime minister of the Peishwa.

\* Printed Treaties, p. 518.

The treaty of Salbey did not give satisfaction at Bombay; the council was jealous of that of Bengal as supreme council, and pointed out to the directors that the abridged power of the Bombay presidency in deference to that of Bengal, and the diminution of territory caused by the treaty, would enfeeble and impoverish that presidency, and require remittances from England or from Bengal annually. They also intimated that as Bombay was contiguous to the most powerful Mahratta tribes, it was the most suitable of the three presidencies in which to maintain a large military force.

The differences between the councils at Madras and Bengal were still more prominent than those between Bengal and Bombay. From the arrival of Lord Macartney to the retirement of Hastings, those feuds became more and more bitter. It was intended by the company to nominate his lordship governor-general upon the retirement of Hastings.

\* *Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings first Governor-General of Bengal*. Compiled from original papers by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, A.M., vol. ii. p. 438.



This had been communicated to him, and had the effect of making him insubordinate and ambitious. He seemed to think it necessary to prove his qualifications for his future post by contravening all the acts of its present possessor, which in any way came within the scope of his resistance. As Hastings was not a man to be trifled with, his modes of procedure were energetic, prompt, and summary, so that Madras and Bengal resembled two independent European settlements, between which a state of peace was barely maintained by the authority of the country they represented.

The proceedings in England during the parliamentary discussions of 1783 upon the introduction of Fox's India bill reacted upon the insubordinate presidencies of Bombay and Madras, strengthening their disposition to defy or thwart the supreme council, and more especially the governor-general, who, although he had the faculty of attaching strongly to himself the great mass of the civil servants, military, and other European residents, was hated by the class of servants occupying the highest posts. His fertile and active mind was continually engaged upon some expedient to correct their imperfect transaction of public business, or to avert the consequences of their want of political aptitude. This, of course, placed him in the position of a censor perpetually, no matter how graceful the courtesy with which he endeavoured to carry out his re-arrangements and counter orders. Hence this class of civil servants, and sometimes the superior military and naval officers, were constantly reminded of their own mediocrity and of his statesmanship, intelligence, and marvellous acquaintance with Indian affairs. However these men loved their country and wished its success, and even were ready to die for it on the field, they were not disposed to see their ideas of their own consequence and dignity so completely ignored as they were when Hastings quietly undid performances of which they were proud, or listened with an indifference scarcely concealed by politeness to opinions which he knew to be worth no consideration. His calm resolution to overrule all imperfect administration and unwise political contracts and decisions, and carry out government in a way adapted to native prejudice, and deal with surrounding states on broad principles of policy, such as the existing state of things required, was not comprehended by these men, and they considered their rights infringed by usurpation, and the councils set at nought by the dominancy of a single will. Hastings was always really solicitous to please and soothe the mediocrities, and often succeeded won-

derfully : if he had not, he could not have conducted the government of India at all. It was impossible, however, to do so when these men had all their own prejudices fostered and encouraged by such able men as Francis, such energetic men as Clavering, or such an ambitious and influential person as Lord Macartney. Such men were intellectually and by position too powerful not to collect around them and enlist under their banner all the nonentities of the upper ranks of Indian civil and military life, by flattering their prejudices and appearing to espouse their cause against an autocrat who, however eminent, was not always successful, and, at all events, was not infallible. When the news reached India of the comments made upon the conduct of public affairs in India by Hastings, every petty consequential member of the presidential councils affected an air of wisdom, and made a point of moralizing upon those transactions in which the equity of Hastings had been questioned before the bar of public opinion in England. The directors generally censured the policy of Hastings, without setting it aside. They wished to profit by its results, for it was obviously in their interest, but at the same time they were anxious to stand well with the public in England, who took superficial views of the events in which Hastings had been engaged. The directors had also to study the wishes and opinions of government, ever on the watch to grasp if possible the patronage of the government of India. Dreading the encroachments of the crown and parliament, the directors were constantly trimming between their own direct interests in the East, and the necessity of conciliating the ministry of the crown. They were secretly pleased with what Hastings had done to increase or ensure their annual investments and enlarge their sphere of territorial revenue, yet they affected to condemn his measures, lest the government should make their approval a pretext for depriving them of power. Some of the directors were in the interest of the cabinet, and hardly disguised the fact. Hastings, like Clive, had a far better chance of fair play, justice, and support from the proprietary of the company than from the directors. Many of his opponents in India acted from what they supposed to be the wish of the directors, which they represented Hastings as controlling unlawfully by his arrogant will and overbearing abilities. Under such circumstances, it was no wonder if, upon receipt of the tidings of attack upon Hastings in the English press and parliament, the self-sufficient and empty men in India who had crept up to high office by seniority should take advantage of the encouragement afforded them not only to



oppose, but to revile the governor-general, although the only man in India in the English interest thoroughly acquainted with its multifarious peculiarities, its governments, languages, the modes of thinking of its peoples, the policy of its princes, and the relations of the company to all the intricate and complicated interests prevailing within and around the Indian possessions.

During 1782-3 the council of Bengal sometimes assisted Hastings heartily; but at other times they displayed a spirit of opposition, according as tidings reached them from home of the fluctuating influence of Hastings there. It is difficult to account for the apparently capricious opposition or support sometimes displayed by this strangely composed group of men. The senior was Mr. Wheler; next to him was Mr. Macpherson, formerly agent to the Nabob of Arcot; then Mr. Stables, who had been, like Mr. Wheler, a director,—and who, like that gentleman, brought with him to the council exaggerated ideas of his own importance from that circumstance. The opinions entertained by Hastings concerning this trio are upon record, and may well afford instruction, as well as amusement, to the curious in Anglo-Indian history. In a letter to his English agent, Major Scott, he wrote: “You will wonder that all my council should oppose me; so do I. But the fact is this; Macpherson and Stables have intimidated Wheler, whom they hate, and he them most cordially. Macpherson, who is himself all sweetness, attaches himself everlastingly to Stables, blows him up into a continual tremour, which he takes care to prevent from subsiding: and Stables, from no other cause that I know, opposes me with a rancour so uncommon, that it extends even to his own friends, if my wishes chance to precede his own in any proposal to serve them. In council he sits sulky and silent, waiting to declare his opinion when mine is recorded, or if he speaks, it is to ask questions of cavil, or to contradict, in language not very guarded, and with a tone of insolence which I should ill bear from an equal, and which often throws me off the guard of my prudence; for, my dear Scott, I have not that collected firmness of mind which I once possessed, and which gave me such a superiority in my contests with Clavering and his associates.”\* In the same letter Hastings writes:—“I stay most reluctantly on every account, for my hands are as effectually bound as they were in the year 1775, but with this difference, that there is no lead substituted to mine.”†

That the minds of the council were influ-

\* Gleig's *Memoirs of Hastings*, vol. iii. pp. 121, 122.

† Ibid. p. 129.

enced by the attacks made upon Hastings at home, he assured Major Scott, in his correspondence, that he had unequivocal proof. These men, instead of doing their duty to the company and their country, as the governor did according to his views of duty, merely managed their own interests and prospects so as to be compromised in no way by Hastings, however just his views or conduct. A manly, patriotic view of their obligations to stand by their chief, when according to their conscience he did right, does not seem to have actuated them at all. Wheler confessed to the president that he dared not support him from fear of the prejudice against him in England, which was worked up by the ministry, and such as hoped to profit by tearing the government of India from the hands of the company. Hastings, in one of his letters, tells Scott what Wheler had admitted, and then adds:—“As to the other two, they received an early hint from their friends not to attach themselves to a fallen interest, and they took the first occasion to prove that if I was to be removed, their removal was not to follow as a necessary consequence of their connection with me, by opposing me on every occasion, on the most popular grounds, on the plea of economy and obedience of orders, which they apply indiscriminately to every measure which I recommend, and Mr. Stables with a spirit of rancour which nothing can equal but his ignorance. His friend, with the most imposing talents and an elegant and unceasing flow of words, knows as little of business as he does, and Mr. Wheler is really a man of business; yet I cannot convince him of it, nor persuade him to trust to his own superiority. He hates them, and is implicitly guided by them, and so he always will be by those who command him, and possess at the same time a majority of voices.”\*

Towards the close of 1783 Hastings proposed the abolition of the British residency in Oude, and the surrender of all interference there with the government of the vizier. It is not easy to see the motive of this. The reasons assigned by Hastings are not convincing. Probably there were motives of a public nature beneath the surface which influenced him, but it was at the time generally attributed to personal resentments against men employed in the British agency at the court of Oude. The council opposed his plan, but he prevailed, and immediately adopted means to carry out his purpose. The governor, for some reason, was desirous of meeting the vizier, and proposed to the council to go in person. This proposal was resisted by them, but at last conceded, and on the 17th of February, 1784, he proceeded on his journey. The

\* Gleig's *Memoirs of Hastings*, vol. iii. pp. 145, 146.



necessity of coming to some arrangement with the vizier for the payment of his obligations to the company was urgent, for he had incurred fresh debts by arrears, to the amount of half a million sterling. His country was in danger of famine, and the financial affairs of his government were utterly embarrassed. The governor gave him sound counsel—formed plans for his extrication, and withdrew all interference on the part of the company with the government of Oude. He caused to be given back to the begums the jaghires which had been wrested from them at his own instigation; and it is a curious circumstance that in a letter to Mrs. Hastings, published in Gleig's *Memoirs*, he describes the begums as in his interest, yet they had originally been denounced by him as enemies and traitors, as a ground for depriving them of their property. This has been severely commented upon by various writers, and almost bitterly by Edward Thornton; but so rapid were the changes of policy among oriental princes and politicians, that an enemy in one year or month might be a fervently in the next. Hastings may have been right on both occasions in the contradictory accounts given of them.

While at Lucknow he was met by Prince Mirza Jewar Lehander Shah, heir-apparent of the Mogul. The object of the prince in seeking the interview, and the conduct of Hastings towards him, are thus described by M. Auber:†—"His object was to be enabled to return to his father's court with suitable attendants, and to have a jaghire equal to the amount granted to him during the administration of Meerza Nudjiff Cawn, and to be employed against the Sikhs. In order to preclude the appearance of a distinction to which the Mogul's known affection for his younger son, Meerza Ackbar Shah, might raise some objection, he requested his brother might be employed in a similar service in some other quarter. Mr. Hastings being constrained to quit Benares, left his body-guard to support the prince. The vizier also agreed to allow him four lacs per annum. It appeared that the Mogul had received but one lac and a half for his support in the preceding year, and that it was the object of the prince to obtain some increase of allowance for his father. Mr. Hastings then explained the feelings which had operated on his mind. He was persuaded that the court would have experienced the same."

The letter of the governor-general to the directors is beautiful and touching, display-

ing the deep susceptibilities which lay beneath the cold surface of the astute politician. The way in which he puts a transaction which might be censured by the calculating directors is eloquent and persuasive, justifying the opinion of his old enemy Francis, that there was no resisting the pen of Hastings. Having reasoned with his employers on the righteousness of acting as he had done to the heir of the Mogul throne, he adds:—"Or let it be, if it is such, the same weakness of compassion that I did when I first met the prince on the plains of Mohawer, without state, without attendance, with scarce a tent for his covering, or a change of raiment, but that which the recent effect of hospitality had furnished him, and with the expression of a mind evidently struggling between the pride of inherent dignity, and the conscious sense of present indigence and dependence. Had his subsequent conduct developed a character unworthy of his high birth, had he appeared vain, haughty, mean, insolent, or debased by the vices which almost invariably grow on the minds of men born to great pretensions, unpractised in the difficulties of common life, and not only bred, but by necessity of political caution familiarised to the habits of sloth and dissipation, I could have contented myself by bestowing on him the mere compliment of external respect, and consulted only the propriety of my own conduct, nor yielded to the impulse of a more generous sentiment. I saw him almost daily for six months, in which we were either participators of the same dues of hospitality, or he of mine. I found him gentle, lively, possessed of a high sense of honour, of a sound judgment, an uncommon quick penetration, and a well-cultivated understanding, with a spirit of resignation and an equanimity of temper almost exceeding any within the reach of knowledge or recollection."

On the 22nd of November, 1784, Hastings, worn out by opposition, his mind wearied, and his body enfeebled, wrote requesting to be relieved from his cares of office. He alluded to his letter of the 30th of March, 1783, when he made a similar request. The court of proprietary in London had overborne both the court of directors and the house of commons, in a firm determination to retain and support him in his authority. This, however, neither secured him from attack at home, nor opposition from his colleagues in government. He accordingly addressed a letter to the directors, which throws a full light upon the state of English interests in India at that time, his own relation to them, and the causes by which both were produced:—"If the next regular advices shall contain either the express acceptance of my resignation of the service, or

† *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, vol. i. pp. 682-3.



your tacit acquiescence, I shall relinquish my office to the gentleman who stands next to me in the prescribed order of succession, and return to England as soon as the ship *Berrington* can be made ready to sail. My constitution, though naturally not of the strongest texture, yet for many years retained so uniform an exemption from positive disorder as not to require one day of grace from my official employment, is now so much enfeebled by the severe illness with which I was attacked in the year 1782, that it is no longer capable in any degree of those exertions to which it was formerly equal, and which were at no time sufficient for the discharge of all the duties which my place exacted of me. Nor am I the only diseased part of it. It is itself distempered. Witness the cruel necessity which compelled me for nine months to abandon the seat of government itself (referring to his visit to Lucknow), and all the weighty occupations of it, to attend to one portion of its charge, which, under a sounder constitution, might have been better conducted and with fuller effect by orders known to proceed from competent authority to enforce them. I do not believe this government will ever be invested with its proper powers till I am removed from it, nor can it much longer subsist without them. I am therefore a hurtful incumbrance on it, and my removal, whenever or however effected, will be a relief to it."

Before he could execute his determination to quit the country, various occurrences took place which exercised considerable influence over the future. Madajee Scindiah, the great Mahratta, obtained from the Mogul, for the Peishwa, the high imperial office of Vakeel-ul-Mulluck, which gave him a supreme control in the foreign administration of the empire. This had long been an object of ambition with the Mahrattas. Scindiah himself sought the appointment of grand naib or deputy of the Vakeel-ul-Mulluck.

In consequence of the perpetual complaints of the directors as to the charges for the government of Bengal, the governor-general organized efficient means of retrenchment. One of the most interesting incidents connected with the close of his government was his review of the sepoy troops who had returned from the war in the Carnatic. Twice, under circumstances which made the act adventurous, Hastings sent sepoys from Bengal to make war in South-western India. It has been already shown how he dispatched to the Bombay presidency a force of sepoys. That wise and adventurous act was performed against the opinion of his council. Not less than seven thousand men, attended by more than thirty thousand camp followers, began

that memorable march, which they prosecuted with persistence and fidelity. Hastings knew that they would never consent to go by sea, in consequence of their class prejudices, and he determined to launch them forth upon the sunburnt plains of Bengal, and to send them through the rocky ravines of the Deccan, and across the great southern rivers, until they poured forth their force with effect upon the shores of Malabar. On the second occasion, when Madras was in imminent danger of falling before Hyder Ali, he sent five regiments eleven hundred miles along the coast of Coromandel, and opposed them to the disciplined troops of France with success. They returned in four years, just before the governor-general's departure. They were called out for review; and as the governor-general rode down the lines, he was received with an enthusiasm such as European soldiers have not surpassed when some great chief, who had often led them to battle and to victory, presented himself to inspect their lines. Hastings, dressed as a civilian, rode along the ranks, his head uncovered, while wild acclamations of attachment rose in the course of his progress. The address of Hastings, on that occasion, was characteristic, displaying his capacity to adapt himself to all classes of natives. It was received by his sable soldiers with almost frantic delight, and its language was transmitted, with astonishing accuracy, from father to son among the Rajpoot sepoys, for many years. Even yet the old sepoys of Bengal talk of Hastings, and his address to the native heroes who went forth to the wars in the Carnatic, with delight and pride; just as the native women all over Bengal, from the remotest parts of the upper provinces to the marshy shores of the Bay of Bengal, sing to their children of the great sahib Warren Hastings, the number of his horses and his elephants, the richness of his trappings, and the splendour of his train.

The success of the sepoy brigades which the governor sent to Western and Southern India is often quoted as a proof that the Bengal sepoys do not deserve the reprobation which many modern writers have poured upon them, and the authority of Hastings is quoted as justifying the unreasoning reliance placed upon the sepoys who, in 1857, revolted in a mutiny so extensive and determined. The cases have no parallel. Hastings chose his black soldiers from among the Rajpoots, the most gallant and high-spirited race in India, a military class, faithful to the military chief or government they serve, so long as that government preserves its compact with them. The Bengal army which mutinied in 1857 was more Brahminical than military. It was an army of



religious fanatics, whether Brahmin or Mussulman; and in India, the more religious the man, the worse he is as a soldier or a servant. The religions of the Brahmin and the high Mussulman constrain to acts which unfit them for faithful officials or constant soldiers. The Bengal army of 1857 had been chosen mainly from Oude and Agra, from certain Mohammedan and certain Brahminical districts, where the fanaticism of the people, from various causes, is more intense than anywhere else in India. So far from these soldiers being like the sepoy of Hastings—the gallant Rajpoots of 1780-85—there exists a hatred to the latter among the Oude sepoy, even marriage connection with them being forbidden, except to the members of two small Rajpoot tribes who are contiguous to Oude.

A writer of some popularity, and who, at the time he wrote, had no such comparison as is here instituted before his mind, thus describes the sanguinary bigotry and fanaticism of the Oudeans in one particular aspect of it, which exemplifies the assertion that the sepoy of 1857 and those of 1781 were men of different mould:—"A respectable landowner of this place, a Sombunsie, tells me that the custom of destroying their female infants has prevailed from the time of the first founder of their race; that a rich man has to give food to many Brahmins, to get rid of the stain, on the twelfth or thirteenth day, but that a poor man can get rid of it by presenting a little food in due form to the village priest; that they cannot give their daughters in marriage to any Rajpoot families save the rhatores and chauhans; that the family of their clan who gave a daughter to any other class of Rajpoots would be excluded from caste immediately and for ever; that those who have property have to give all they have with their daughters to the chauhans and rhatores, and reduce themselves to nothing, and can take nothing from them in return; as it is a great stain to take 'kuneeda dan,' or virgin price, from any one; that a Sombunsie may, however, when reduced to great poverty, take the 'kuneeda dan' from the chauhans and rhatores for a virgin daughter, without being excommunicated from the clan; but even he could not give a daughter to any other clan of Rajpoots without being excluded for ever from caste; that it was a misfortune, no doubt, but it was one that had descended among them from the remotest antiquity, and could not be got rid of; that mothers wept and screamed a good deal when their first female infants were torn from them, but after two or three times giving birth to female infants, they became quiet and reconciled to the usage, and said, 'do as you like;' that some poor

parents of their clan did certainly give their daughters for large sums to wealthy people of lower clans, but lost their caste for ever by so doing; that it was the dread of sinking in substance from the loss of property, and in grade from the loss of caste, that alone led to the murder of female infants; that the dread prevailed more or less in every Rajpoot clan, and led to the same things, but most in the clan that restricted the giving of daughters in marriage to the smallest number of clans."\*

These were not the men from whom the sepoy of Hastings were enlisted. He knew better than to put so high a confidence in men of the stamp that committed, in 1857, the atrocities of Delhi and Cawnpore.

On the 10th of January, 1785, Hastings wrote to the directors, apprising them that his advices from England rendered it essential for him to retire from the government. In this letter occurs the following remarkable, it may perhaps be called extraordinary passage, when all the antecedents of Hastings as governor-general are considered:—"I conceive it now to be impossible for your commands to require my stay on the terms which I might have had the presumption to suppose within the line of possibility: were such to be your pleasure, it is scarcely possible for your commands, on any subject which could concern my stay, to arrive before the season required for my departure. I rather feel the wish to avoid the receipt of them than to await their coming; and I consider myself in this act as the fortunate instrument of dissolving the frame of an inefficient government, pernicious to your interests and disgraceful to the national character, and of leaving one in its stead, such as my zeal for your service prompts me to wish perpetual, in its construction to every purpose efficient."

Hastings now made energetic preparations for departure. Mrs. Hastings had been sent before, and it was reported that she retired from the shores of India burdened with the most costly presents: jewels, the rarest and most brilliant, the most exquisite carvings in ivory, the gold work of Benares, and even specie, were said to have been lavished by rich natives and the Indian princes upon one whose influence over Hastings was so great. It was generally believed that he knew but little of these magnificent gifts, the reception of which, it was believed by the English at Calcutta, he would have prevented. When the period for his departure arrived, the consternation of some of the native princes surpassed the joy of those who were enemies of England, and even the astonishment of all. The sepoy idolized the great sahib as they

\* Sleeman's *Journey through Oude*.



had previously adored Clive. The English regarded Hastings with a profound affection and respect, and they now gave vent to these feelings in the most demonstrative manner. Mr. Hastings delivered up the keys of Fort William and of the treasury to Mr. Macpherson, in the council-chamber, on the 1st of February. That gentleman succeeded as governor-general, under the provisions of the acts of the 13 and 21 Geo. III., and took his seat on the 3rd. From motives of respect to Mr. Hastings, the council determined that the ceremonial of succession should not take place until the *Berrington* had sailed. A letter from Mr. Hastings, dated on board, the 8th of February, announcing her departure, having been received at Calcutta, the proclamation of the new government was made with the usual formalities.

When Hastings was about to retire, numerous addresses were presented to him both by English officials, military men, and residents; the natives vied with the British in the mode of marking their respect. When he proceeded to the place of embarkation, an immense crowd lined the way which his carriage and suite traversed. Numerous barges attended his departure down the Hoogly, and it was not until the pilot left the ship, and the coasts of Bengal were dim in the distance, that some of the attached followers of Hastings returned to the Hoogly. During the voyage his active mind employed itself in his favourite pursuit—literature. He read much during the long voyage, and produced several compositions, one of which obtained much notoriety and some praise—an imitation of Horace's *Otium Divos rogat*. This was dedicated to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, one of the most useful and gifted public men who had served the company in India, and who, after a most laborious and skilful organization of the revenue in Bengal, and long years of statesmanlike labour, had returned to Europe only a month before his friend. The ex-governor-general, who landed in June, 1785, at Plymouth, proceeded at once to London, where he was received by crown and company with high distinction. In another chapter his home perils and vicissitudes, which were imminent and extraordinary, will be recorded; it is here only necessary to give a brief and general view of the estimation in which his services in India, and his character as developed by those services, are held in the present day. Probably Miss Martineau has, with more brevity, and in terms more expressive than any other writer, conveyed the general estimate of this great man, and of his fortunes, in the following passage:—"He committed

crimes, and inflicted misery, as unnecessarily (according to modern opinion) as wickedly. But, these crimes apart, he was a great benefactor to both countries by amalgamating them to a greater extent than any other man had done, or than any other could have done. He was the first governor of India who could and did converse with any natives in their own tongue. He was the first who opened the potent and mild resources of intellectual sympathy, by cultivating and honouring oriental literature, and interesting the best minds of Europe in the history of our native subjects in Hindostan. He made the way easier for future governors, and finished with his own strong hand the revolutionary period which perhaps no other could have brought to a close. It is impossible to esteem him, and it is impossible not to admire him. Without any appearance of a conscience, and with nearly as little indication of a heart, he had a most effective understanding, and deserved whatever praise can be commanded by vigorous and patient resolution, and a life of strenuous purposes carried out in unfaltering action. He could hardly have been a happy man at any time; but he was strong and collected enough to keep his foes at bay, and win a final victory over them in the form of an acquittal from charges for which he had in fact undergone a protracted punishment of disgrace and suspense. He won royal favour, and a good deal of popular admiration; was made a privy councillor and the idol of the street; and he died, Hastings of Daylesford. He would probably have confessed in some soft hour of sunset, under the old oaks, that he did not enjoy them so much after the heavy price he had paid for them as when, in his childhood, he dreamed of possessing them, without a thought of guilt to be risked in the acquisition of them."

However eloquently correct this expression of the views taken of Hastings generally in the present day may be, there is just ground for exception to many of the dicta pronounced. It is not true that Hastings committed crimes for which he saw no necessity. No necessity of state, or of the individual, can, of course, justify a crime; but in some of the instances in which Hastings sinned, and sinned grievously, he was deceived by his own casuistry; he believed that a great necessity at least extenuated his guilt. He did evil that good might come. He supposed, in some cases, that the vast benefits to be ensured by a policy which was not equitable or moral compensated for the misdeeds. This unrighteous, and because unrighteous impolitic, principle has been avowed by many statesmen and divines who



have been ready enough to censure the conduct of Warren Hastings. They have themselves, under far less temptation and less pressure of difficulty and danger, pursued a similar policy, and adopted a similar justification with an effrontery of which Hastings had set no example; for while it is evident that his mind was beguiled by the idea that the end sanctified the deed, he did not suppose himself wholly under the influence of such a principle. He always acted upon an avowal of abstract justice, and where no principle of equity was involved, he supported his policy by its utility to the government, and its beneficial influence upon the governed. It is impossible to wade through the debates and minutes in council, in which Hastings participated, especially when he was the chief support of Governor Vansittart, as the author of this History has done, without perceiving that the mind of Hastings was ever open to an appeal founded upon justice. Miss Martineau deems it impossible to esteem him; yet no Englishman in India ever excited an esteem so universal. Nor is it true that he was "without any appearance of a conscience, and with nearly as little indication of a heart," as his resistance to tyranny during the government of Vansittart proves against the one accusation, and his devoted friendships and home attachments prove against the other. One of the last acts of Hastings was an act of touching friendship. His last letter, written only a few hours before death, was worthy of a man both of heart and conscience.

When at Daylesford he enjoyed the *otium cum dignitate*. There are no facts known connected with the life of Hastings to prove the probability of Miss Martineau's supposition, that he looked back with such pain upon his public acts as disturbed the quietude of his repose—a supposition in itself absurd on the part of a writer who believed he had no conscience. Miss Martineau follows too closely in the train of Lord Macaulay, from whom her views, favourable and unfavourable, of Hastings were too implicitly drawn: just as his lordship accepted too easily the statements and opinions of Mill, which—however softened and qualified by him—he in the main followed. Hastings, although a great man, was probably not quite so great as he is generally supposed to have been; and was certainly a better man than it has been the fashion to depict him. It would be impossible in a religious or even merely ethical acceptation to call him a good man; but posterity will doubtless mitigate the stern judgment of the present generation upon him, while, to the latest times, his government of India, his self-reliance, courage, energy, and talents will be an admiration and a wonder. It may be long before the moral portrait of him, painted by one (Lord Macaulay) whom Bulwer\* calls "the Titian of English prose," shall cease to fill the mind of the reading public; but a time will arrive, when in spite of all that is reprehensible in him, a more agreeable as well as just conception will be formed.

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## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

### WAR WITH HYDER ALI OF MYSORE—HIS INVASION OF THE CARNATIC—HIS DEVASTATIONS, VICTORIES, CRUELTY, AND DEATH.

ON former pages the imbecility of the governments of Bombay and Madras, especially of the latter, during the time when Warren Hastings was governor-general of India, has been depicted; and it was stated that in consequence of the insubordination of the council of Madras to the supreme council, Hyder and the French were permitted without opposition, and to a great extent without suspicion, to form an intimate alliance—the former organizing a vast army, to a considerable extent on French principles of tactics and discipline, and with the aid of French officers. He was also allowed, without being impeded by any countervailing address on the part of the council, to negotiate alliance with the Mah-

rattas, and thus to engage on his side the most powerful people among the natives of India. The object of Hyder was not simply ambition; vengeance had also a place in his motives. He had made various stipulations with the English, who had injured and insulted him almost in every case with scandalous breach of treaty. Notice has been taken on previous pages of the bad faith of the English, who were mainly influenced in deserting Hyder by fear of provoking the powerful Mahrattas, and by a reluctance to incur the censure of the directors at home, who were constantly anxious lest their councils should

\* *What will he do with it?* vol. i. p. 91. By Pisistratus Caxton.



embroil them with the native potentates by alliances and treaties, offensive and defensive. In 1767 the council of Madras made a treaty of this nature with Hyder, after he had passed in swift conquest over the Carnatic, and threatened Madras itself. When next he was at war with the Mahrattas, the English refused to fulfil their agreements, and he from that hour hated them. In 1778, when again menaced by the Mahrattas, Hyder appealed to the English to fulfil their treaty, they again violated their honour, and inflamed the hatred of the prince they had thus betrayed to an almost intolerable degree. He declared that no terms could be kept with a nation whose officers were perpetually changed, each new council disclaiming the acts of that which had preceded it.

When the English threatened the French settlement of Myhie, Hyder remonstrated with them, declaring that he considered that place his own, and the French occupying it under him. The English disregarded his remonstrance, and drove the French out. They could not have done otherwise. Myhie could not have been permitted as a *point d'appui* for the French in the close neighbourhood of the English settlement of Telli-cherry. The French never acknowledged Hyder practically as the lord of Myhie; they consulted no master but the French governor at Pondicherry. The remonstrance of Hyder was, therefore, unreasonable; and it is obvious that he merely claimed the sovereignty of the place because he was anxious to keep the British within bounds, and to use the French as a counterpoise to the English on the coasts of Western India. The English were resolved to brave all dangers in expelling rivals so dangerous and troublesome as the French, and consequently alike disregarded the threats and arguments of Hyder. From the moment Myhie was seized by the English, Hyder, already their relentless and aggrieved enemy, prepared himself for war, and his preparations were on a scale of stupendous magnitude, such as in numbers of men and military material might excite the envy and admiration of some of the first military nations in Europe. It consisted of 28,000 cavalry, 15,000 regular infantry, 40,000 peons, 2,000 rocket-men, 5,000 pioneers, 400 Europeans, and a wild host of fanatical and half-armed followers. The council of Madras wrote to the council of Calcutta that affairs were of a warlike complexion, and then with an infatuation only to be accounted for by the ignorance, pride, and obstinacy which were so generally displayed by the Madras government, they neglected all precaution, and even addressed the directors in London in

terms which only became men whose affairs, political and commercial, were in a state of perfect security. While the Madras government was lulled in the torpidity which conceit and stupidity are sure to beget in the minds of public men, Hyder suddenly rushed forth with the force and dash of a cataract through the passes, precipitating a vast army from the table-land of Mysore upon the sea-girt plains of the Carnatic.

On the 19th of June the council was aware that Hyder had left Seringapatam to join the grand army assembled at Bangalore, marshalled under the direction of officers of France, his army having been consecrated by the Mohammedan ecclesiastics, and the Hindoos having performed the solemn ceremony of jebbum for its success. Ten days later it was known at all the presidential capitals that Hyder was marching upon the Carnatic at the head of one hundred thousand men, and that his army was such as never before had been commanded by a native sovereign of India. Miss Martineau has as beautifully as truly said—"Then ensued that invasion of the Carnatic which is as celebrated an event as any in the history of India. The mighty host poured down from the breezy table-land of Mysore upon the hot plains of the Carnatic through the passes, and especially through that one which Sir James Mackintosh found so safe for the solitary traveller seven-and-thirty years later—as wild with rock and jungle in the one case as the other, but witnessing within one generation the modes of life which are usually seen five centuries apart. Mysore was rising under Hyder to the stage of improvement which a vigorous Mohammedan ruler can induce upon an exhausted Hindoo state; but, under British superintendence, the best policy of Hyder had been left far behind for many years, when the recorder of Bombay made his philosophical observations on the security of life, property, and industry on the very road by which Hyder had descended to lay waste the Carnatic." Descending from Chamgana, he dealt destruction with remorseless hand. Fire and the sword spread a wide circle of desolation; and the slightest hesitation on the part of the miserable inhabitants, in obeying his orders to withdraw from their homes, was followed by horrible barbarities. He commanded that ears should be cut off, noses slit, and other mutilations practised upon men and women, although it must be admitted that the latter were frequently spared when the former were savagely treated. Colonel Wilks confutes most modern writers as to the extent of the desolation made by Hyder, affirming that it only comprised such a circle



around Madras as would, in Hyder's opinion, deprive it of supplies, while he found forage and food in the Carnatic generally.

At last arrangements for defence were made by the feeble president and council of Madras. Sir Hector Munro commanded in chief, but he was detained in the capital by the governor for the benefit in council of his military knowledge and experience. Colonel Macleod, a good officer, was appointed to command in the Carnatic. Sir Hector was of opinion that the English forces should assemble near Congeveram. Colonel Macleod declined carrying out that plan, on the ground that, although at an earlier period it might have been an effective defensive position, it was now too late to make it the point of convergence. Sir Hector, still relying upon his own plan, determined on carrying it out himself, and on the 29th of August, 1780, took the command at Congeveram of his little army of five thousand men. This force was to have been speedily augmented by troops then under the command of Colonel Baillie, which had been the previous year dispatched to protect Bazalet Jung, who had been menaced by Hyder. Meanwhile, Hyder, with extraordinary promptitude, surprised various British posts of strength, and by bribery secured the surrender of others. On the part of the British, the first object was to secure different strong places now held by the troops of the nabob, who, it was not doubted, would surrender them to the enemy on the first attack. Several fell; but two were saved by the exertions of very young British officers. Lieutenant Flint, with a company of one hundred men, having proceeded to Wandiwash, was refused admittance by the killadar or governor, who had already arranged the terms on which the fortress was to be given up. Flint, however, having with four of his men procured access, seized the commandant, and, aided by the well-disposed part of the garrison, made himself master of the stronghold. Baillie, however, remained with his troops at Guntoor. Hyder's information was perfect; the people, even those whom he dispossessed, sympathised with him, if they were Mohammedans; and natives of the high caste heathen were desirous to see the English driven out by any native prince. Hyder determined on preventing the junction of Baillie and Munro, and in order to effect this purpose, placed a large *corps d'armée* under his son Tippoo, whose hatred to the English, if possible, exceeded his own. Hyder himself had laid siege to Arcot, but leaving a corps sufficiently numerous to invest it, he, with his main army, took post within six miles of the encampment of Sir Hector Munro. On the same day

Tippoo attacked Colonel Baillie, and was repulsed. This was the first real battle of the campaign, and the English had the advantage in arms. Tippoo, although defeated, was not discomfited. He harassed Baillie's little force incessantly, hovering upon his flanks with clouds of cavalry, and constantly menacing a renewed attack. Baillie informed Munro that he was unable to join him with his troops, thus impeded by a superior force. Munro, unable to take the offensive while his army was thus separated, sent a detachment of one thousand men, the pick of his troops, to form a junction with Baillie, who might, by this accession, be enabled to break his way through the corps of Tippoo. Officers experienced in Indian warfare\* have denounced the strategy of Munro in this instance, as exposing not only the detachment of Fletcher, but the main army under his own command to the danger of being attacked in detail and destroyed. Munro, however, by a happy audacity, proved his superior skill in the face of native armies. These rules of warfare, applicable when Europeans meet Europeans, are frequently of little importance when Europeans contend with native armies. More battles have been gained by the British in India by a daring yet intelligent neglect of the rules of campaigning received in Europe than by adherence to the laws of military science. Tippoo, who had the English spies and agents in his pay, was apprised of the expedition of Fletcher, but, instead of attacking the head-quarters of the British with his main army, he manoeuvred to intercept Colonel Fletcher, and was baffled by the superior military skill of that officer. Fletcher, deceiving his own guides, succeeded in deceiving Hyder. On the 9th he joined Baillie. The French officers on Hyder's staff did not penetrate the designs of Munro, but supposed that he intended to effect a separation of the corps of Tippoo from the grand Mysorean army, and then to fall upon the latter. Tippoo had correct information, and acted accordingly. His French advisers counselled retirement. Hyder believed that the moral and military effect of a retreat would be disastrous, and he determined to maintain the positions which he already occupied, and observe the movements of the English, until chance should give his vigilance an advantage. Baillie, strengthened by Fletcher, began his march. Hyder, by a series of masterly movements, endeavoured to bring his army into action in such way that his whole strength might be directed against his opponents. Baillie, by a series of blunders, the chief of which was an intolerable self-confidence, played into Hyder's hands. An obstinate conflict en-

\* Colonel Wilks' *History of the Mahrattas*.



sued. The British soldiers fought with a heroism that could not be surpassed; the sepoys broke and fled, and Baillie having displayed dauntless courage, seeing all hope gone of saving his European soldiers by battle, advanced, waving his handkerchief as a flag of truce, and surrendered. Scarcely had the English laid down their arms than the soldiers of Hyder fell upon the defenceless men, and perpetrated one of the most cowardly and infamous massacres recorded in the annals of even Indian war. The sick and wounded, women and children, were hacked and hewn in pieces with savage delight by the younger soldiers of Hyder's army especially.\* The barbarity of the troops was, if possible, exceeded by the barbarity of their chief. The heads of the slain were heaped at his feet, as he sat within his tent, and the prisoners were paraded before him as they were made the objects of every conceivable indignity, and the victims of many atrocious cruelties. The efforts of the French officers to mitigate the horrors to which the captive English were exposed were honourable to their nation, but Hyder was deaf to their persuasions and remonstrances. Even after the fury of battle and exultation of victory were long past, the prisoners were subjected to a cruel incarceration. One of the sufferers thus describes it:—"We were often told, and through other channels we knew it to be the fact, that actual force had been used on the persons of many of our countrymen in other prisons, with the expectation that when they bore the indelible mark of Mohammedanism they would apostatize from God, and abjure their earthly sovereign. The same abhorred expedient recurred to our minds as intended for us whenever a stranger of rank visited the prison, especially if he seemed to cast a scrutinizing eye on our persons. In such a state of complicated mental distress nearly four years of the prime of life were consumed; and during this sad period our corporeal sufferings were not inferior in their degree to those of our minds. Our couch was the ground, spread with a scanty allowance of straw; the same wretched covering which shielded our limbs from nakedness by day served to enwrap them also by night. The sweepings of the granary were given us in any "dirty utensil or broken earthen pot. Swarms of odious and tormenting vermin bred in our wounds, and every abomination to the sight and smell accumulated around us, till its continuance became intolerable to our guards."†

During the conflict of Baillie, Sir Hector Munro exhibited as few qualities of a commander as the colonel. His efforts to relieve

Baillie were not only inefficient, but absurd, and his conduct afterwards not less so. He fell back to Chingleput, losing nearly all his stores and baggage; there he was joined by a reinforcement under Captain Cosley, but there was no commissariat. By forced marches he brought his army to Mount St. Thomas, near Madras, on the 14th of September. In three weeks the army had been nearly destroyed, and disgrace inflicted upon British arms in spite of the most dauntless courage on the part of officers and men, in consequence of the inordinate self-esteem, obstinacy, and ignorance of the officers in command. When the experience and ability of Sir Hector Munro are considered, his incompetency throughout this brief and fatal campaign is truly astonishing. On the 15th the English army changed its position, taking post at Mermalong, where a river flowed along its front.

During this short period of shame and disaster the council of Madras were as disunited, haughty, and incapable as ever. When they saw their army driven back upon Madras itself, and thick volumes of smoke by day and columns of fire by night darkening or brightening the horizon where the brands of Hyder's soldiery were busy, their hearts sank within them, and they gave vent to the language of despair and dismay. Hastings, however, was busy far away in Calcutta. His fertile mind and busy industry took care of Madras when its own council was paralysed with fear.

Hyder was as active on the theatre of war as was Hastings in the chamber of the chief presidency. The Mysorean immediately laid siege to Arcot, which he reduced in spite of a gallant defence. It, however, held out until the 3rd of November, seven weeks after the fugitive English took up their position at Mermalong. Arcot would hardly have been captured before relief arrived, had it not been for the usual treachery of the Brahmins. The governor was a distinguished person of that caste, and was captured by Hyder's troops in an assault. Hyder bribed him, and invested him with his previous office. The traitor continued to sap the fidelity of the Brahminical sepoys. The Mohammedan sepoys already sympathised with the invader, and thus the town was lost. Whenever an opportunity occurred for influencing the fanaticism of the sepoys, no matter how loyal they had previously proved themselves, they were ready to espouse the cause of the enemy who shared their religious sympathies. The victory of Hyder also enabled him to lay siege to Wandiwash, Vellore, Chingleput, and other places of strength in the Carnatic, where he inspired the garrisons with the

\* Colonel Wilks' *History of the Mahrattas*.

† Lieutenant Melville's *Narrative*.



most gloomy apprehensions, and pressed them with desperate pertinacity and boldness.

Hastings had sent Coote to take the place of Munro, and the gallant old general arrived a few days after the fall of Arcot. Hastings sent with him five hundred and sixty European troops. It was at this juncture that he determined to dispatch his sepoy army to march along the coast as soon as the rainy season terminated. He suspended the president of Madras, putting the senior member of council in his place. Money was sent with Coote, but its disposal remained in his own hands.

The reinforcements brought by Coote raised the shattered army of the presidency to the number at which the force under Munro had been computed, irrespectively of that commanded by Baillie. About one thousand seven hundred Europeans and more than five thousand sepoys obeyed the orders of the new general. The reputation of Coote inspired confidence, and the fifteen lacs of rupees committed to him by Hastings gave him the means of marching his army from the vicinity of Madras, and, small as it was, of taking the offensive. Hastings counselled such a course, and prepared with all his available resources to aid the general by further supplies of men and money. It was at this juncture that the Rajah of Berar excited apprehensions at Calcutta by the dubious part he played, and involved Hastings in intrigues which met with subsequent censure in England, the real merits of the case having been misunderstood both by the company and the British parliament. The first care of Coote was to put Madras in a state of defence, which the council had neglected, each thinking only for his own safety, maturing plans of flight to Bengal or to England. Fortunately it was the rainy season, so that the true cause of the inactivity of the English army was concealed from Hyder. At the end of the year 1780, Coote called a council of war, and it was determined at once to march against the hosts of Mysore. Mr. Murray thus describes the views and prospects of General Coote when setting out with his little army against odds so great, and the progress of affairs until Hyder was brought to the first general action in which Coote encountered the Mysorean forces:—

“What he dreaded was the harassing warfare carried on by Hyder in a country which he had already converted almost into a desert. The English army, when it left Madras, was like a ship departing on a long voyage, or a caravan preparing to cross the deserts of Arabia. Everything by which life could be supported must be carried along with it; and the soldiers, continuing to depend on the

capital alone for supply, were in danger of absolute famine. As they moved in a close body through this desolated region, never occupying more than the ground which they actually covered, clouds of the enemy's cavalry hovered round them; who, finding that they did not choose to waste their ammunition on individual objects, even rode up to the line, and held an occasional parley, uttering from time to time a fierce defiance or an invitation to single combat. Dallas, an officer of great personal prowess, successfully encountered several of the Indian chiefs, and his name was called out by the most daring of the champions. In this mode of fighting, however, the natives in general had the advantage. Harassing as such a warfare was, and though the Mysorean chief continued to refuse battle, he was obliged to raise the siege of every place upon which the English directed their march. In this manner the important fortresses of Wandiwash and Permacoil were relieved, and a stop was thereby put to the career of the enemy. The British commander, however, in following the rapid movements of this indefatigable adversary, found his troops so exhausted, and reduced to such destitution, as left no prospect of relief except in a general action, which he scarcely hoped to accomplish. But Hyder at length, encouraged by the appearance of a French fleet on the coast, and by a repulse sustained by our countrymen in attacking the pagoda of Chillumbrum, intrenched his army in a strong post near Cuddalore, where he at once maintained his communication with the sea, and cut off the supplies of his opponent.”

The same author, with well expressed brevity, thus describes the battle which ensued when Coote was enabled to initiate an attack:—“This station was extremely formidable; but Sir Eyre Coote skilfully leading his men through a passage formed by the enemy for a different purpose, drew them up in the face of several powerful batteries as well as of a vast body of cavalry, and finally carried all before him. The rajah, seated on a portable stool upon an eminence in the rear of the army, was struck with amazement at the success of the attack, and burst into the most furious passion; refusing for some time to move from the spot, till a trusty old servant almost by force drew the slippers on his legs, and placed him on a swift horse, which bore him out of the reach of danger.”

Previous to the foregoing victory, the English fleet gained a decided advantage at sea. The French naval force referred to in the foregoing summary of events, fearing the approach of an English fleet, left the roads of Pondicherry, somewhat relieving Coote from



the distressing dangers which at that time cast a gloom over his hopes. Sir Edward Hughes attacked the ships of Hyder in his own ports of Calicut and Mangalore, and utterly destroyed the hope of forming a maritime power, which was one of the chief objects of Hyder's ambition. On the 14th of June the British admiral, having performed this signal service, returned to Madras, bringing with him a reinforcement from Bombay. These circumstances greatly encouraged Coote in the offensive operations which were so bravely carried out. The consequences of this action were most important: the English were for the second time enabled to relieve Wandiwash, then besieged by Tippoo. Both armies retired to the neighbourhood of Arcot. Hyder abandoned all hopes of conquering the southern provinces.

The sepoy force which Hastings sent by land did not arrive until August, and when it formed a junction with the Madras army, it was with greatly reduced numbers, many of the sepoys having perished on the line of march from physical incapacity to endure its hardships, and many having deserted. In the last chapter notice was taken of the review of these troops upon occasion of their return to Bengal by Hastings, and of the lavish praise he bestowed upon them. By many of these brave Rajpoots the panegyrics of the great governor-general were deserved; but that class of historians by whom the sepoys are too lavishly commended have not only overlooked (as before stated) that the returned victors were Rajpoots, not Oudeans or Bengalees, but also the fact that the march of the force was disgraced by desertion, and at times when the temptations to forsake their colours were few, and of no extraordinary force. The project of sending them was a bold one. Hastings knew that, and made the most of his success. It was politic in him to conceal any impressions of an unfavourable nature which he might have entertained, but a correct relation of the facts demands the statements that more of the soldiers sent by Hastings from Bengal to Madras died from disease, or were lost by desertion, than fell in battle. Too much was made of the achievement by Hastings himself, who had a strong motive for acting as he did, and by those who since have followed him, in the excessive praise bestowed upon the instruments of a scheme of which he was so proud. The events which followed the first conflict, so fortunate for the British, are thus summed up by Murray:—"After sundry marches and countermarches, Hyder once more took the field, and waited battle in a position chosen by himself, being no other

than the fortunate spot, as he deemed it, near the village of Polilloor, where he had gained the triumph over the corps of Colonel Baillie. Here General Coote led his troops to an action which proved more bloody than decisive; for though he placed them in various positions, he found them everywhere severely annoyed by a cross-fire from the enemy. Mr. Mill's authorities even assert that his movements were paralyzed by a dispute with Sir Hector Munro, and that had the Mysorean captain made a vigorous charge he would have completely carried the day. But he at length yielded the ground on which the battle was fought, and the English reached it over the dead bodies of their yet unburied countrymen who had fallen in the former action. The natives, according to some accounts, boasted of this encounter as a complete victory; but Colonel Wilks says they represented it merely as a drawn battle, which was not very far from the truth."

This representation, so far as it is unfavourable to the British, rests upon the authority of Mill alone. There was no occurrence between Coote and his second in command, Sir Hector Munro, which could be construed into a dispute delaying the progress of the battle. The conduct of Sir Hector was, as usual, obstinate, self-sufficient, and he undoubtedly disobeyed orders, but the action went on uninfluenced by the fact. There could be no dispute, according to the laws of war, as to which side had the victory. Hyder, notwithstanding the amazing advantages of his position, was driven off the field utterly discomfited. The account of the action given by an officer afterwards distinguished as Sir Thomas Munro was as follows, and is at variance with the picture of confusion and disaster depicted by Mill:—"The position of Hyder was such, that a stronger could not have been imagined. Besides three villages, which the enemy had occupied, the ground along their front, and on their flanks, was intersected in every direction by deep ditches and water-courses; their artillery fired from embrasures cut in mounds of earth, which had been formed from the hollowing of the ditches, and the main body of their army lay behind them. The cannonade became general about ten o'clock, and continued with little intermission till sunset, for we found it almost impossible to advance upon the enemy, as the cannon could not be brought, without much time and labour, over the broken ground in front. The enemy retired as we advanced, and always found cover in the ditches and behind the banks. They were forced from all before sunset, and after standing a short time a cannonade on open ground, they fled in



great hurry and confusion towards Congeveram."

The English now suffered severely from want of provisions. Sir Eyre Coote was in continual alarm lest from this cause he should lose his whole army. Hyder had so denuded the country of provender, cattle, corn, and rice, that the English army was reduced to the greatest straits. Madras was itself in danger of famine; and Vellore, upon the support of which the preservation of the Carnatic strategically depended, was nearly in a starving state. Coote anxiously hoped for battle, as affording him the only prospect of extricating him from his difficulties.

The enemy took post at the pass of Sholingar, on the Vellore road; and on the 27th of September the advanced guard of Coote approached their pickets. According to Mill, Hyder occupied a favourable position, which he had skilfully chosen to give battle to the English once more: according to Colonel Wilks, the British surprised him, and the chief object of Hyder was to withdraw his guns in safety, to effect which he resolved upon the sacrifice of his cavalry as the only alternative. Sir Thomas Munro (not Sir Hector), then an officer of inferior rank, supposed that Hyder hoped by successive charges of cavalry, given on different parts of the English line, to break it. He accordingly thus gives the main features of the battle:—"He divided his best horse into three bodies, and sent them under three chosen leaders to attack as many parts of our army at the same time. They came down at full gallop till they arrived within reach of grape, when, being thrown into confusion, the greater part either halted or fled, and those that persevered in advancing were dispersed by a discharge of musketry, except a few who thought it safer to push through the intervals between the battalions and their guns than to ride back through the cross fire of the artillery; but most of these were killed by parties in the rear. This attack enabled Hyder to save his guns. Except the escort with the artillery, every man in the Mysorean army shifted for himself. The loss of the enemy was estimated at five thousand, that of the English fell short of a hundred."

General Coote was unable to follow up his victory. His chief object was to find supplies. He obtained a large quantity of rice, sufficient to afford a supply to his army, and to provision Vellore, so as to enable it, for a short time, at all events, to maintain itself.

After the conquest of Mylie, the Madras portion of the army employed against that place was quartered at Tellicherry, but in May it was ordered to join the army on active service in the Carnatic, and its place was sup-

plied by Bombay troops, under the command of Major Abingdon. One of Hyder's best generals, aided by the Nairs, besieged the place. The major in vain sent to the Bombay presidency for provisions, money, and men; and he was at last ordered to give it up. He refused to do so, and so effectually remonstrated upon the impolicy and disgrace of such a step, as well as upon the cruelties to which the garrison would be subjected, that he received counter orders, and reinforcements were sent to him. The major was an officer of great enterprise and courage: he immediately determined upon a sortie with his whole force. So well were his plans laid, that he surprised the enemy's outposts, stormed and captured them, and at dawn drove them in panic from their camp. He gave them no chance of re-collecting, so sudden was the attack, that they were scattered in every direction, like the fragments of an exploded shell. Abingdon reinstated the native chiefs whom Hyder's lieutenant had deposed, and deposed those whom he had appointed; and then, by forced marches, advanced upon Calicut. The place was prepared for a powerful resistance; but by accident, the day after Abingdon's arrival, the chief powder magazine exploded, spreading destruction throughout the garrison, and opening a practicable breach in the walls, which Abingdon instantly prepared to storm. The terrified enemy surrendered at discretion.

The English were so hampered by want of money and provisions, that they could not accomplish anything against the enemy during the autumn of 1781. Coote was therefore obliged to withdraw his army to cantonments in the month of November, fixing his head-quarters in the immediate vicinity of Madras.

Lord Macartney had now arrived as governor of Madras; and whatever his abilities, they were lost to the cause by his ambition to oppose Hastings in everything, and make his government virtually independent of the governor-general and the supreme council. Mill thus describes the spirit with which his lordship entered upon his government, his general objects, and the projects which immediately engaged his attention:—"He landed at Madras on the 22nd of June, 1781, and then first obtained intelligence that the country was invaded. He came to his office when it undoubtedly was filled with difficulties of an extraordinary kind. The presence of a new governor, and of a governor of a new description, as change itself under pain is counted a good, raised in some degree the spirits of the people. By advantage of the hopes which were thus inspired, he was en-



abled to borrow considerable sums of money. Having carried out intelligence of the war with the Dutch, and particular instructions to make acquisition of such of their settlements as were placed within his reach, he was eager to signalise his arrival by the performance of conquests, which acquired an air of importance, from the use, as seaports, of which they might prove to Hyder or the French. Within a week of his arrival, Sadras was summoned, and yielded without resistance. Pulicat was a place of greater strength, with a corps in its neighbourhood of Hyder's army. The garrison of Fort St. George was so extremely reduced as to be ill prepared to afford a detachment. But Lord Macartney placed himself at the head of the militia; and Pulicat, on condition of security to private property, was induced to surrender. Of the annunciation which was usually made to the princes of India, on the arrival of a new governor, Lord Macartney conceived that advantage might be taken, aided by the recent battle of Porto Novo, and the expectation of troops from Europe, to obtain the attention of Hyder to an offer of peace. With the concurrence of the general and admiral, an overture was transmitted, to which the following answer was returned, characteristic at once of the country and the man:—'The governors and sirdars who enter into treaties, after one or two years, return to Europe, and their acts and deeds become of no effect; and fresh governors and sirdars introduce new conversations. Prior to your coming, when the governor and council of Madras had departed from their treaty of alliance and friendship, I sent my vakeel to confer with them, and to ask the reason for such a breach of faith; the answer given was, that they who made these conditions were gone to Europe. You write that you have come with the sanction of the king and company to settle all matters; which gives me great happiness. You, sir, are a man of wisdom, and comprehend all things. Whatever you may judge proper and best, that you will do. You mention that troops have arrived, and are daily arriving, from Europe: of this I have not a doubt. I depend upon the favour of God for my succours.' Nor was it with Hyder alone that the new governor interposed his good offices for the attainment of peace. A letter signed by him, by Sir Edward Hughes, and Sir Eyre Coote, the commanders of the sea and land forces, and by Mr. Macpherson, a member of the supreme council, was addressed to the Mahrattas, in which they offered themselves as guarantees of any treaty of peace which might be contracted between them and the governor-general and council of Bengal: and declared their willingness to accede to

the restoration of Gujerat, Salsette, and Bassein."

Lord Macartney followed up these proceedings by other active measures, which do not fall within the province of this chapter to relate. The governor and council of Bengal, believing that the Nabob of the Carnatic had the means of aiding the council in the war with Hyder, and yet withheld them, intimated that, as his highness's territory was then overrun by a powerful enemy, his authority was virtually gone, and that it might be necessary for the supreme council to collect and apply the entire revenues of the state in the military operations necessary to expel the foe. They were, however, unwilling to resort to that extreme measure, and expressed a willingness to accept of several lacs of pagodas as a temporary supply. The nabob would not, and Mill maintains that he could not, grant this sum. He, moreover, pleaded that limitations had been set by the supreme council upon his liability to contribute money. It was soon discovered by the Madras council that the nabob had secretly negotiated with Hastings, and had entered into arrangements with him, of which Lord Macartney and the Madras council heartily disapproved. Thus the council of Madras was not only at war with Mysore, but was set at defiance by its ally, the nabob—was overruled by the supreme council in matters which involved both councils in disputes, and, to complete the picture of confusion, the members of council were divided amongst themselves. To all these disorders another was soon added: the commander-in-chief of the army and the president became irreconcilably at variance. The general had independent authority, which he was proud to exercise, and was testy if the slightest remonstrance was expressed by the council. He would take offence even at the most polite request. The council, in consequence of the independent authority of the general, had no control over the military expenditure, and this, in the eyes of the natives, brought the council into contempt. Rich natives refused to make loans, although, in former periods of trouble, they were prompt to do so, feeling content with government security and a moderate interest.

The claims of the creditors of the nabob introduced a fresh source of trouble. When they—Europeans and natives—found that the Bengal government insisted upon an assignment of the nabob's revenues, they naturally urged that the private debts of his highness should first be satisfied, or that the government should secure their payment out of the revenues of the Carnatic. Both the councils of Bengal and Madras, timid of the effects of



such a measure on the court of directors at home, were reluctant to make such an undertaking, yet felt the difficulty of seizing upon his revenues, and neither liquidating his debts nor leaving himself the means of even paying the interest. Upon the settlement of the financial questions connected with the nabob, which afterwards created so much discussion in England, Mill observes as follows:—"On the point, however, of the assignment, the situation of affairs, and the sanction of the Bengal government, appeared to the president and council sufficient authority for urging the nabob forcibly to concur with their views. With much negotiation it was at last arranged—that the revenues of all the dominions of the nabob should be transferred to the company for a period of five years at least; that of the proceeds one-sixth part should be reserved for the private expenses of himself and his family, the remainder being placed to his account; that the collectors should all be appointed by the president; and that the nabob should not interfere. By this deed, which bore date the 2nd of December, 1781, the inconveniences of a double government, which by its very nature engendered discordance, negligence, rapacity, and profusion, were so far got rid of; though yet the misery and weakness to which they had contributed could not immediately be removed."

Upon this paragraph Dr. Wilson thus comments:—"This is evidently the main object of the agreement projected, not executed, with the nabob, by the government of Bengal. In the reply of Hastings to the objections of the government of Madras, he first apologises for the interference by the character of Lord Macartney's predecessors. 'Your lordship,' he says, 'will not ask why we thought our intervention on this occasion necessary, and why we did not rather refer the accommodation to the presidency of Fort St. George, which was the regular instrument of the company's participation in the government of the Carnatic; but I will suppose the question. I might properly answer it by another. Why did the company withdraw their confidence from the same ministry, to bestow it on your lordship?' He also declares that had he known of Lord Macartney's nomination, he should have referred the nabob to his government. He urges the enforcement of the agreement as being the act of the government of Bengal, and having been done by them; but he lays stress only on the 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th articles; the two first insisting upon the assignment of the revenues of the Carnatic and Tanjore, and their application to the purposes of the war; and the two last proposing the consolidation of the nabob's debts, and

arrangement with the creditors. The whole matter was, however, left finally to the decision of the Madras presidency."

Such was the condition of affairs, in prospect of a campaign against Hyder, in 1782. The army had a short repose in cantonments. Before the monsoon had spent its strength, the fall of Chittore was made known at Madras; and it was declared, by messages sent from Vellore, that that place could not hold out beyond the 11th of January. It was absolutely necessary, at all costs, to save Vellore. General Coote, whatever his excellent qualities in the field of battle, was a bad purveyor, and his system of transport was cumbrous, burdensome, and defective. No other officer could, so encumbered, effect such rapid marches; but he required such an amount of baggage, and, consequently, carriage with his army, as to entail vast charges upon the treasury, and to defy all resources of commissary arrangement. The general had no idea of economy in any direction; but in the matters of cattle, carriages, servants, and material his extravagance was beyond all bounds. The exorbitant demands for equipment and conveyance were the principal source of difficulty and alarm. "To carry the necessaries of thirty-five days for twelve or fourteen thousand fighting men, the estimate of the quarter-master was 35,000 bullocks. Not to speak of the money wanted for the purpose, so great a number could not be procured; nor was it easy to conceive how protection could be afforded from Hyder's force, to a line of so many miles as the march of thirty-five thousand bullocks would of necessity form. The number of bullocks now in store was eight thousand. With these and three thousand coolies, or porters, whom he could press, it appeared to the president that the army might convey what was absolutely necessary. The urgency of the case made the general waive his usual objections."\*

Coote at once proceeded to the relief of Vellore on the 2nd of January, 1782. The events which followed, in the task which he proposed to himself, displayed his genius as a strategist, and the courage and perseverance which characterised the gallant veteran. He was ill when he joined the army; old age had already laid its burdens on his head, and he was exhausted by the fatigues which he had undergone. To all these causes of depression was added the anxiety resulting from the impoverished resources of the government, and his perpetual differences with Lord Macartney and the council. Notwithstanding, he displayed an energy which he had never previously surpassed, and an indomitable deter-

\* Mill, vol. iv. book v. chap. v



mination to accomplish the undertaking upon which he set out, which neither illness, enemies, nor difficulties of any kind could conquer. His proceedings in this expedition, and the fortunes which befell him, have been related with admirable brevity and correctness in the following passage:—"Though with broken health, he joined the army on the 2nd of January; but on the 5th he suffered a violent apoplectic attack, and the army halted at Tripassore. On the following day he was so far revived as to insist upon accompanying the army, which he ordered to march. They were within sight of Vellore on the 10th, and dragging their guns through a morass, which Hyder had suddenly formed by letting out the waters of a tank, when his army was seen advancing on the rear. Before the enemy arrived, the English had crossed the morass; when Hyder contented himself with a distant cannonade, and next day the supply was conducted safely to Vellore. As the army was returning, Hyder, on the 13th, again presented himself on the opposite side of the morass, but withdrew after a distant cannonade. On the evening of the 15th the enemy's camp was seen at a distance; and a variety of movements took place on both sides on the following day: after mutual challenges, however, and a discharge of artillery, the contenders separated, and the English pursued their march to the Mount."\*

While Coote was executing his gallant task at Vellore, a detachment of reinforcements, which arrived under General Meadows, landed at Calicut. This body of troops was under the command of Colonel Humberstone. The troops under Major Abingdon, with that officer himself, were now ranged under the colonel, who at once marched against a detachment of Hyder's army. The disproportion of numbers was such as to compel Humberstone to make a speedy retreat, after losing two-thirds of his men. Coote hearing of this disaster, sent Colonel Macleod to take the command, which he had scarcely done when Tippoo Sultan made a night attack, which the colonel repulsed with much skill

\* Mill, vol. iv. book v. chap. v.

and spirit. Admiral Sir Edward Hughes cooperated with the colonel. A variety of skilful movements took place on both sides, when suddenly Tippoo withdrew his army. This arose from tidings having reached him of Hyder Ali's death. Upon this event Edward Thornton observes:—"He closed his ruffian life at an age not falling short by many years of that of Aurungzebe. To avert confusion, it was important to conceal his death until his successor was on the spot to maintain his claim. The body was accordingly deposited in a chest filled with aromatics, and sent from the camp under an escort in a manner similar to that in which valuable plunder was conveyed. All the business of the state went on as usual, and inquirers after the health of the chief were answered, that though extremely weak, he was in a state of slow but progressive amendment. Of the few persons entrusted with the secret, one only, named Mohammed Ameen, proved faithless. This person, who commanded four thousand horse, formed a project, with some others, to take off by assassination those who provisionally administered the government, and to assume their power in the name of Hyder Ali's second son, a young man of weak intellect, in whose hands empire would have been but an empty name. The plot was detected, the conspirators seized and sent off in irons; the belief that Hyder Ali still lived being encouraged by these acts being represented as the consequences of his personal orders. The army marched in the direction of Tippoo Sultan's advance, and the palanquin of Hyder Ali occupied its accustomed place, care being taken to restrain too close approach, lest the repose of the royal patient should be disturbed and his recovery impeded by noise or interruption. At length the illusion was dispelled by the arrival of Hyder Ali's successor, who assumed the sovereignty which awaited him with an extraordinary affectation of humility and grief."

It was on the 7th of December, 1782, that Hyder expired. On the 2nd of January, 1783, his son, Tippoo, privately entered the capital, and was at once recognised as sovereign of Mysore.



## CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

THE WAR WITH TIPPOO SAHIB—WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CARNATIC—CONQUESTS IN WESTERN INDIA—SIEGES OF MANGALORE AND ONORE—VICTORIES OF COLONEL FULLARTON AND GENERAL STUART—DEFEAT OF BUSSY AND THE FRENCH—PEACE WITH FRANCE—PEACE WITH TIPPOO.

THE death of Hyder Ali afforded the British a good opportunity for military enterprise, which was lost chiefly through the supineness or ignorance of General Stuart. That officer succeeded Coote, whose health compelled him to retire for repose to the more peaceful and secure capital of Calcutta. He had been, like Clive, the idol of the soldiery; his departure at such a crisis was unfortunate for the interests of the army and the company. His age, and the infirmities attending upon age, rendered such a course imperative. Probably no commander at his time of life, and under such severe and repeated visitations of illness, ever bore up so well, or so pertinaciously persisted in the discharge of such onerous military duties. General Stuart was not a man of equal purpose, although capable of an obstinacy ruinous to his army and his government. This general refused to move his troops on the death of Hyder. He even refused to believe that event, or as was suspected, pretended not to believe it, for when at last it was impossible to affect incredulity, he refused to march because his army was badly provided with material, and because he believed it incompetent to face the enemy.

Meanwhile, Tippoo Sultan placed himself at the head of his army, which, after all his conflicts and losses, possessed a numerical strength equal to that which it presented to Hyder Ali, when he led it forth from Seringapatam for the invasion of the Carnatic. The treasure left by Hyder exceeded three millions sterling, besides great store of jewels, and the magazines and arsenals of Mysore were filled with provisions and appurtenances of war. The power of Tippoo Sultan was truly formidable, and he proceeded to make a formidable use of it. General Stuart could not be induced to march until Hyder Ali had been two months dead, and Tippoo had more than a month to mature his plans, and stimulate the enthusiasm of his soldiery, which he did by every possible means. General Stuart made one movement previous to that time, which was for the purpose of bringing provisions to the depôt of Tripassore, situated at no great distance from the cantonments. Lord Macartney would not allow the general to assume the extraordinary

powers of his predecessor, but undertook himself to direct military affairs, leaving to the general's discretion the *modus operandi*. The first plan of Macartney was one in which Stuart fully concurred,—the destruction of the forts of Carangoly and Wandiwash.

Sir Eyre Coote having speedily recovered his health in Bengal, was requested by Hastings to return to Madras, which the daring old soldier was most ready to do. On the passage by sea, the vessel in which he sailed was pursued for two days and nights by a French line-of-battle ship. Coote was so excited that he remained on deck during the whole of this time. The anxiety, fatigue, and exposure to climate brought on a renewal of his disorders, and he merely arrived in Madras to die. This event was most dispiriting to the English army, especially to the sepoys, who lamented his death in a manner that proved their strong attachment to him. This circumstance left General Stuart and Lord Macartney in full opportunity to mismanage a struggle, for participation in which nature had not endowed them.

In the meantime Tippoo Sahib used every exertion to strengthen his army. He was joined by a French force late in the year 1782. This reinforcement consisted of nine hundred Europeans, two hundred and fifty Caffres and topasses, and two thousand sepoys. At the commencement of 1783 the whole British force in the Carnatic was not twelve thousand sepoys and topasses, and not more than three thousand Europeans, if quite so many.

General Stuart, after blowing up the fortifications of Wandiwash and Carangoly, and having withdrawn the garrisons, felt himself strong enough to offer battle, which he did on the 13th of February; but the enemy, awed by the appearance of his army, retired with precipitation and some confusion. The English followed up their success, and the retreat of the enemy became almost a panic. Soon after the general received intelligence that Tippoo was retiring from the Carnatic. Arcot was evacuated by the enemy, and two sides of the fort blown up. The object of Tippoo's withdrawal from the Carnatic was not fear of General Stuart. He had heard of the enterprise and success of the Bombay



troops under Major Abingdon, Colonel Humberstone, and afterwards General Mathews; and, alarmed at the perils to which his dominions were exposed in that direction, he determined to concentrate his strength there. Stuart was bewildered by this movement, and, after some marching without any definite object, he returned to the Mount.

The proceedings which took place on the western side of the peninsula, while General Stuart remained inactive, were interesting and eventful. General Mathews was ordered by the Bombay council to push forward with energy against the important city and fortress of Bednore. This command he executed with an impetuosity the force and audacity of which carried all before it. He ascended some of the steepest of the ghauts, where the enemy never for a moment supposed that the British would venture. He literally stormed some of the most formidable passes at the point of the bayonet, and with a rash and daring valour threw his force against vastly superior bodies of the enemy, astounding them by the rapidity and fearlessness of his attacks. Finally, he laid siege to Bednore, which surrendered without a blow. This city was reputed to be rich, and a large amount of treasure was supposed by the troops to have been seized by General Mathews, and applied to his own use. Professor Wilson, in commenting upon the remarks of Mill as to the disappointment in the army upon the reports of General Mathews appropriating money which they expected to be prize, and upon the remarks of Mill upon the sudden surrender of Bednore, thus wrote:—"As far as they originated with the disappointment of the army, they were unfounded. No such amount of treasure could have been collected in Bednore. The circumstances of the surrender of that place to the English, which General Mathews thought little less than providential, considering the defective state of his equipments, have been fully explained by Colonel Wilks, from original documents. Bednore was yielded without resistance, from the treason of the governor, Ayaz (Hyat) Khan, one of Hyder's military pupils or slaves, who had always been in disfavour with Tippoo, who apprehended disgrace or death upon that prince's accession, and who had intercepted orders for his destruction. He therefore at once ceded the province and capital to the English, and upon its investment by Tippoo, made his escape to Bombay. He probably stipulated for the preservation of what treasure there was in the fort, and he claimed compensation for what was lost, when the place was recaptured. His claim was but 1,40,000

pagodas, and the accounts of the finance minister of Mysore state the embezzlement to have been upwards of one lac, not eighty-one, as particularized in the text. As usual, therefore, the English were deceived by their own unreasonable expectations, and as the negotiation between Ayaz and the general was kept a profound secret,—indeed Colonel Wilks supposes it possible that General Mathews himself was not aware of the motives of the governor, which is by no means probable,—they were at a loss to understand why they were deprived of even so much of their booty as was to be divided. The conduct of the general after the occupation of Bednore, when the withdrawal of the positive orders of the Bombay government left him free to fall back on the coast, exhibits as great a want of military judgment as his disputes with his officers manifested irritability of temper. Colonel Wilks has given a very copious and interesting account of the whole of this calamitous transaction, vol. ii. 448, et seq."

Notwithstanding the fortunate issue of the campaign, the strictures made upon the subsequent generalship of Mathews by Colonel Wilks and Dr. Wilson were as just as severe. His capacity appeared to consist in sudden dash, in comprehending at once in the midst of action the boldest measure practicable, and, in defiance of all danger, executing it.

After the surrender of Bednore, nearly all the forts and cities of the province surrendered. A few held out, and one of these offered a protracted, obstinate, and dishonourable resistance. The town and fort of Anapore fired twice upon flags of truce; and when, after all, surrender was offered, and a party was sent to take possession, it was attacked at disadvantage in a mode which justified any retaliation afterwards. The English commander ordered all men found in arms when Anapore and Onore were stormed to be put to the sword. The order was to some extent carried out, and a terrible slaughter resulted.

After these victories, contentions the most fierce and disgraceful took place among the superior officers of the English army. Macleod, Humberstone, and Shaw proceeded to Bombay, and complained of General Mathews to the council. He was superseded, and the command given to Colonel Macleod, with the rank of brigadier-general. Macleod was a rash man, with less ability for command than Mathews. He had scarcely received his new commission, when he disclosed his want of prudence. Mill thus relates the circumstance and its consequences:—"Colonel Macleod, now brigadier-general and commander-in-chief, returning to the army with the two other officers, in the *Ranger* snow, fell in with



a Mahratta fleet of five vessels off Geriah, on the 7th of April. This fleet was not, it appears, apprized of the peace; and Macleod, full of impatience, temerity, and presumption, instead of attempting an explanation, or submitting to be detained at Geriah for a few days, gave orders to resist. The *Ranger* was taken, after almost every man in the ship was either killed or wounded. Major Shaw was killed, and Macleod and Humberstone wounded; the latter mortally. He died in a few days at Geriah, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, and was lamented as an officer of the most exalted promise; a man who nourished his spirit with the contemplation of ancient heroes, and devoted his hours to the study of the most abstruse sciences connected with his profession."

The English army was distributed in the conquered provinces without any regard to military science. Tippoo Sahib, well informed of all that had taken place, and having brought his powerful army across from the Carnatic, now entered upon the theatre of British triumph and folly. Mathews still remained in command, in consequence of the misfortune which had befallen Macleod. He was not prepared for an invasion of his newly-acquired conquests by Tippoo Sultan in person. He believed that his highness was in the Carnatic, contesting for its mastery with General Stuart. Mr. Murray thus describes the inroad of Tippoo and the conduct of Mathews:—"Tippoo was greatly annoyed on learning the fall of this important place [Bednore], and the near advance of the enemy towards his capital. Mathews was soon informed that successive corps were throwing themselves on his rear, and surrounding him with a force against which he would be unable to cope. He had by this time obtained permission from the Bombay government to act according to his own discretion; but he was now so elated by his easy victory, that he placed blind confidence in fortune, and even, according to certain statements, believed himself aided by some supernatural power. Thus, reposing in full security, he allowed his communications with the sea to be intercepted, while his troops were surrounded by Tippoo's whole force, aided by the science of Cossigny, a French engineer. The garrison were driven into the citadel, and, after a brave defence, were reduced to the necessity of capitulating, though on favourable terms, receiving a promise that they should be safely conducted to the coast. When the Indian prince obtained admission into Bednore, he proceeded to the treasury; but, to his rage and dismay, found it empty. Orders were then given to search the persons of the English officers, on which unhappily

was found a large sum both in money and jewels, considered always in that country public property. Upon this discovery he considered himself absolved from all that he had stipulated; the prisoners were thrown into irons, and committed to the most rigorous duration in the different fortresses of Mysore."\*

To the south, the skill and vigour of a civil servant of the company, named Sullivan, in connection with Colonels Fullarton and Lang, secured great advantages. Caroor and Dindigul, Palgaut and Coimbatore, were captured. Fullarton was so successful, that towards the end of the war he thought of marching against Seringapatam, and was preparing to carry that project out when peace was proclaimed. While these events were going on in the west of the peninsula, Stuart remained unwilling to undertake anything in the east. The importunities of Lord Macartney and the irritation of his own officers had at last some effect, and in June he began a march which was intended to support the efforts of the forces in Bombay. While Stuart was doing nothing, M. Bussy, who had before distinguished himself so much during the war in the Carnatic between the English and French, arrived from the Isle of France with large reinforcements. By the 13th of June, Stuart took post to the south of Cuddalore; Bussy, confronting him, occupied strong intrenchments defended by formidable redoubts. The English attacked him, stormed a portion of the French works, and captured a number of guns. Stuart, who had proved so incompetent in the general and comprehensive movements of a campaign, showed himself a master of his profession on the actual field of combat. This circumstance confirmed the belief entertained in Madras, that the inactivity of Stuart had arisen from jealousy and dislike of Lord Macartney, and the refusal of that governor to allow the general the extraordinary powers which had been held by Sir Eyre Coote. However this may have been, the general battled bravely and wisely with Bussy and his French army at Cuddalore.

While the English were storming the French lines, the fleet of Admiral Suffrein appeared, and after the battle took on board twelve hundred of Bussy's troops. Soon after the English fleet encountered Suffrein; a long engagement ensued, issuing in a drawn battle, a very common case in those days when the fleets of England and France met off those coasts. Sir Edward Hughes, who commanded the English navy, endeavoured to bring Suffrein to action again on the following day, but

\* *History of British India.* By Hugh Murray, Esq., F.R.S.E., p. 379.



that admiral successfully evaded these efforts. Sir Edward then bore away for Madras roads; Suffrein, expecting such a course, cruised about until opportunity was afforded of re-landing the 1200 men he had received, and with them he also landed 2400 more.

Bussy was now strong, and, selecting the most efficient portion of his troops, he made a well-planned and desperate sortie against the English lines. The fight raged long and fiercely, but never for a moment did the English give way on a single point. Stuart maintained his position everywhere unfalteringly, and repulsed the French so decisively, that the flower of their troops were left dead before the English trenches. Certain Hanoverian troops in the English service distinguished themselves on the occasion by coolness and discipline, which effectually supported the more forward and fiery valour of the British, and gave confidence to the passive performance of duty by the sepoys. Colonel Wilks relates an interesting anecdote connected with this battle, in which the Hanoverian commander had an honourable part:—"Among the wounded prisoners was a young French sergeant, who so particularly attracted the notice of Colonel Wangenheim, commandant of the Hanoverian troops in the English service, by his interesting appearance and manners, that he ordered the young man to be conveyed to his own tents, where he was treated with attention and kindness until his recovery and release. Many years afterwards, when the French army, under Bernadotte, entered Hanover, General Wangenheim, among others, attended the levee of the conqueror. 'You have served a great deal,' said Bernadotte, on his being presented, 'and, as I understand, in India.' 'I have served there.' 'At Cuddalore?' 'I was there.' 'Have you any recollection of a wounded sergeant whom you took under your protection in the course of that service?' 'The circumstance was not immediately present to the general's mind; but, on recollection, he resumed: 'I do, indeed, remember the circumstance, and a very fine young man he was. I have entirely lost sight of him ever since; but it would give me pleasure to hear of his welfare.' 'That young sergeant,' said Bernadotte, 'was the person who has now the honour to address you, who is happy in this public opportunity of acknowledging the obligation, and will omit no means within his power of testifying his gratitude to General Wangenheim.' The sergeant had become one of the most distinguished of the generals of France: it is almost unnecessary to remind the reader that he subsequently attained the exercise of sovereign power in Sweden."

Bussy had suffered so much in his sortie for the relief of Cuddalore that he was in no condition to make further efforts, and Stuart would in all probability have destroyed his army, or compelled it to surrender, had not intelligence been received by both commanders of peace in Europe. Previous to the cessation of hostilities between the English and French, Tippoo Sahib continued his conquering career in the west. It is probable he would have overrun all Western India, so incompetent were the council of Bombay, and the commanders-in-chief appointed by them, had not the skill and bravery of some inferior officers, in charge of fortified positions, resisted his progress. This was the case on the coast of Malabar, where several British forts held out, but the most glorious and obstinate resistance he encountered was at Mangalore and Onore. Two British officers of comparatively humble rank so directed the defence of those cities that Tippoo and his lieutenants were baffled and hindered in their general measures. Finding it impossible to conquer British valour, when directed by competent command, whether in the field or the breach, Tippoo directed the investment of all places having English garrisons, and the cutting off of all supplies, so as to compel the garrisons to surrender from famine. The numerous army of the Mysoreans rendered this strategy safe and expedient.

Soon after Bednore surrendered so ignominiously to Tippoo, he laid siege to Mangalore and Onore. The garrison of the former was commanded by a brave and skilful officer named Campbell; that of the latter by Torriano, whose courage and skill had seldom been surpassed even in the annals of British warfare. During the period which elapsed from the time Tippoo laid siege to Mangalore to the arrival of the news from Europe which stopped hostilities at Cuddalore between Stuart and Bussy, the garrison of Mangalore behaved with the greatest intrepidity, Campbell animating the troops by his wisdom and conduct. At that juncture the garrison was full of hope, although surrounded by vast numbers of the enemy. Tippoo himself by his presence encouraged the besiegers in every way he could devise; but in vain. When the intelligence of peace arrived, it was announced to Tippoo, and an armistice proposed, as one of the articles of the treaty enjoined that the native powers should have four months given to them to adjust differences and fall in with the treaty of concord between the two great European powers. Tippoo was in a situation to refuse any overtures for peace, had not the French in his service immediately prepared for departure on the reception of commands



from Bussy to do so. Tippoo stormed and raved with passion, and even threatened personal indignity to the French; but as they firmly refused co-operation, he was obliged to allow them to depart. Fearing that both French and English would unite against him, if he refused the four months' armistice, he reluctantly consented. The armistice extended also to Onore and the forts of Malabar. According to the terms of the armistice Mangalore, and the other places in the hands of the British, were to be periodically supplied with provisions. Tippoo considered that no faith was to be kept with the English, who had so basely betrayed and broken faith with his father. It is not probable that, under any circumstances, Tippoo would have observed any treaty or armistice longer than superior force constrained. At all events, in this instance he resolved to render the armistice virtually inoperative. He did all in his power to prevent it. His lieutenants at Onore and the other forts were instructed to pursue the same tactics. Works of offence against all these places were carried on, while the English conscientiously, in this and every other particular, observed the agreement into which they had entered. The gallant officer in command at Mangalore besought relief from Bombay; but the incompetent council did nothing for his relief. It was in vain he protested that the sufferings of his troops passed human endurance; the council still remained inactive. There were means which might have been used for his relief, but the council subsequently justified itself for neglecting them, by alleging that they could not send aid in face of the agreement of the armistice. This plea was obviously a mere cover for their supineness, because it was plain they could not be bound by an armistice which was broken by the power with which it was made. Even when the four months of the armistice expired, nothing was performed by the authorities of Bombay to relieve the enduring and noble garrison. It is remarkable that, in the history of British power in India through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the civil servants of the company generally, and the most favoured admirals and generals, were utterly incompetent to meet the duties and emergencies of their position. A miserable mediocrity characterized the vast majority of those who should have been selected to occupy the posts they held by the tests of high intelligence and practical ability. England always found some few men like Clive, Hastings, Coote, &c., in her moments of peril; and Campbell at Mangalore was a man of the class who, in spite of the mediocrities, gained England her renown.

The history of his achievements, and those of his brave soldiers, with the result of their devotion under circumstances of shameful neglect, has been given by Mill in summary, but yet in terms sufficiently comprehensive and complete for the purpose of a full knowledge of the facts:—"At last a cessation of hostilities, including the garrisons of Onore and Curwar, was concluded on the 2nd of August. Of this agreement one important condition was, that the English garrison should, three times a week, be furnished with a plentiful market of provisions, at the rate of Tippoo's camp. This was evaded, and prices were daily in such a manner increased, that a fowl was sold at eight, and even twelve rupees; and other things in a like proportion. At last the market was wholly cut off; and horse-flesh, frogs, snakes, ravenous birds, kites, rats, and mice were greedily consumed. Even jackals, devouring the bodies of the dead, were eagerly shot at for food. The garrison had suffered these evils with uncommon perseverance, when a squadron appeared on the 22nd of November, with a considerable army under General Macleod. Instead of landing, the general, by means of his secretary, carried on a tedious negotiation with Tippoo; and having stipulated that provisions for one month should be admitted into the fortress, set sail with the reinforcement on the 1st of December. Even this supply was drawn from damaged stores bought of a navy agent, and of the beef and pork not one in twenty pieces could be eaten, even by the dogs. Another visit, with a similar result, was made by General Macleod, on the 31st of December. The desertion of the sepoys, and the mutiny of the Europeans, were now daily apprehended; two-thirds of the garrison were sick, and the rest had scarcely strength to sustain their arms; the deaths amounted to twelve or fifteen every day; and at last, having endured these calamities till the 23rd of January, the gallant Campbell, by whom the garrison had been so nobly commanded, offered, on honourable terms, to withdraw the troops. The sultan was too eager to put an end to a siege which, by desertion and death, had cost him nearly half his army, to brave the constancy of so firm a foe; and they marched to Tellicherry, with arms, accoutrements, and honours of war."

The defence of Onore was, if possible, still more intrepid, and was more fortunate, if fortune be a term to apply to what came to pass in the result of the extraordinary wisdom, perseverance, and heroism of Captain Torriano. The character of this hero may be illustrated by a few preliminary facts connected with his relation to Onore during the



war. When General Mathews commenced his operations in Malabar, while yet Hyder lived, and his army ravaged the Carnatic, Torriano was ordered by the general to attack Onore, then garrisoned by the troops of Mysore. He laid siege to it, and, although it was defended by a powerful garrison, furnished with all the appurtenances of war, he was in six days in a condition to make the assault. This he did with so much skill, that the place was captured with little loss of life on either side. The victor was as humane as he was brave; he set the garrison at liberty, except the principal officers, and treated them and the sick with the kindest consideration and care. This he did while Hyder was loading English officers, his captives, with irons, and consigning them to pestiferous and gloomy dungeons. Mathews appointed the conqueror of Onore its commandant. He soon made it a magazine for the English in that part of the newly-conquered territory, and he besought the council of Bombay, through his general, to strengthen the garrison, provide it with supplies, and furnish such means as he knew were available for increasing its defensive strength. He foresaw that Hyder or his son Tippoo would never allow the English to retain their conquests without a struggle, and would seek to reconquer the shores of Malabar and the west country, even if obliged to sacrifice the Carnatic in the attempt. The Bombay council sent no supplies; very moderate aid in food and men would have enabled Torriano to accomplish his plans; but no notice was taken of his good reasoning or his importunity. His masters were conceited, arrogant, and vulgar men.

Soon after Torriano was installed as commandant of Fort Onore, he discovered that "the killadar" of Hyder had hid his jewels during the siege by the English. He restored them to the owner, and sent him away free. The traders of the place had followed the example of the killadar, and hid their valuable effects deep in the recesses of the neighbouring jungle. He brought them thence, and restored them to their owners. His detractors, envious of his fame, and anxious to please the incompetent rulers of Bombay, afterwards endeavoured to create an impression that he had possessed himself of the jewels and merchandise.\* The inhabitants who had fled returned, many of the natives of the surrounding country possessed of property took up their residence in the place, anxious to live under the government of one so equitable and generous.

An island at the mouth of the Onore river, called Fortified Island by the English, was

\* *Oriental Memoirs*. By James Forbes, F.R.S. 4 vols., 4to. London, 1813.

still in the hands of the enemy. Torriano laid siege to it, and the garrison capitulated. His acts of generosity and justice there also were such as have been already related in connection with his occupation of the more important fortress. He continued to govern the city in a manner which obtained the honour and respect of troops and people for the short time the authority of the English remained undisputed. But soon, like the approach of a thunder-cloud, silent and portentous, the army of Tippoo advanced; and then, as the pent-up thunders finding vent, it rolled the terrors of renewed war over all that portion of Western India. Tippoo found little resistance; imbecility, and even cowardice, dishonoured the arms of England. Torriano remonstrated against the military folly of his superiors, especially the surrender of Barcelore, from which the garrison fled in abject terror to Onore, which place they would hardly have been able to reach had he not taken measures to ensure their safe arrival. Yet, with these beaten and cowed soldiers, who, under stupid commanders, were so spiritless and discomfited, he maintained one of the most gallant defences recorded in history, so completely did his own heroism penetrate and inspire all around him. A committee of English civilians at Bednore ordered him, at this juncture, to abandon Onore, spike his guns, and destroy his stores. He replied that his general had ordered him to keep Onore, and he would keep it, and declined obedience to any orders but such as came from his commander-in-chief, informing the committee, in terms at once courteous and firm, that no British general could give such orders in reference to a place of such relative importance. He remained drilling his recruits and feeding the fugitives from Barcelore until the career of Tippoo led him to expect an early visit. He went out upon a reconnaissance with a portion of his troops, attended by one field-piece, and encountered the vanguard of a *corps d'armée* of Tippoo, under the command of Lutoph Ali Bey, a Persian who had served Hyder with distinction. It was then the middle of May. The assailants were ten thousand men. The Persian general sent in a flag of truce, demanding an unconditional surrender, and received a reply brief and defiant. Soon after a skirmish occurred, in which neither party had advantage: the English, however, fell back before the superior force of the enemy. A second flag of truce was sent in, renewing the demand for surrender, to which no reply was returned.

On the 10th of June a breaching battery began to play upon the fort, which the author of *Oriental Memoirs* describes thus:—"The



rampart was narrow and bad; the high walls not more than three feet thick, generally more a mass of mud than of masonry, and through which an eighteen-pound shot easily passed." By field works and other defences the engineer officer supplied, as far as possible, the deficiencies of the old fortifications, and during the night the garrison and citizens worked hard to repair the damages done by the fire of the enemy during the day.

About the middle of June a sortie was effected, which tended much to increase the heart of the garrison, and to dispirit the enemy. Seven guns were spiked, and a considerable number of the enemy bayoneted, before they could prepare for defence, so sudden was the onslaught. Torriano had only six men wounded. One of these was left behind with both thighs broken. The Persian general, in admiration of the bravery displayed, sent him into the city. Torriano rewarded the bearers, and sent a present to the Persian chief, with thanks for his humanity and courtesy. The troops that effected this gallant sortie were British. A second sally was not so fortunate; the troops led out were sepoys, and they deserted their leaders. Torriano himself, with desperate resolution, but with great difficulty, rallied them in time to save the officers.

The enemy was now daunted, and the anger of the previously polite Persian increased to fury. Three countrymen, who had rendered services to the English foraging parties, were seized, their hands cut off, and, in this mutilated condition, sent within the English lines.

On the 1st of July the breaching batteries, strengthened by a number of very heavy guns, opened with decisive effect. The walls were really shaken; the loss of life was considerable; most of the officers were wounded, and among them Torriano himself. The Persian commander heard by his spies that the English commander was hit mortally, and he sent in an old woman to bring him more authentic tidings on the subject; determining, if her report should prove favourable, to storm the breach which his batteries had already made. The vigilance of Torriano soon detected the old woman. He sent her back with the message, "Should he on any future occasion send female emissaries, they might possess more youth and beauty; that they should be well received, and returned to his camp with as much safety as the antiquated duenna who was then conducted out of the garrison." The sufferings of the garrison from the fire of the besiegers now became great, and the sepoys shirked duty in every possible way. These men were mostly recruits from Central India, fine looking, stalwart native soldiers; but they

had no manliness, nor loyalty to the cause which they were there to defend.

The want of provisions, and the appearance of fever, soon produced desertion among these men, which Torriano in vain endeavoured to stop by means of kindness, and by rewards. He at last caught one of the fugitives, and proclaimed that he would spare his life if no further desertions took place. His comrades cared not for his life: that night numerous desertions took place. The next day the native troops were paraded in front of the breach, and the apprehended deserter was blown through it from the mouth of a cannon. All means were taken to make this ceremonial impressive. The troops were marched to the slow measure of funeral military music; the drums rolled to the Dead March, and the culprit was conducted with a stern and imposing solemnity to the place of execution. These proceedings produced no effect; the sepoys had no ear for any kind of music, cared little for human life, were inspired by no magnanimous sympathies, and were plotting desertion on a large scale, while the captain was hoping for important results from the appalling scene. That night a number of sepoys, officers and men, went over to the enemy.

Thus matters continued, the enemy trusting to their cannon, the English to their skill in repairing the demolitions effected, and to their gallant sorties; until at last, on the 24th of August, Captain Torriano was officially informed of the armistice by a messenger sent by the British agent from the sultan's camp before Mangalore. So far as Onore was concerned, it contained these stipulations:—

"A guard shall be placed in the fort from the sultan's troops, and one in the trenches, from the fort, to observe that no operations are carried on, nor any works erected on either side.

"A bazaar, or market, shall be daily supplied to the fort, containing all kinds of provisions, which the troops belonging to the garrison shall be allowed to purchase.

"Thirty days' provision may be received monthly from Bombay, but no military stores or ammunition will be allowed to enter the fort."

Lutoph Ali determined to render nugatory the armistice, just as Tippoo himself was prepared to do at Mangalore. The English commander, finding that all the stipulations for the suspension of arms were violated, except that the enemy did not open their batteries or attempt to storm the place, applied to the commander-in-chief of Tippoo's army, to whom Lutoph was second in command. The Persian pretended to send these communications, but retained the letters. Torriano had no means of sending any communications



from the city, but through the harcarrahs of the sultan.

Lutoph Ali effectually prevented the entrance of provisions. To the remonstrances of the English captain he returned the most polite answers, but in no way altered his proceedings. He had obviously resolved to starve the garrison. The Englishman managed, however, by threats of a sortie, to exact some attention to his demands for permission to secure supplies. Matters were in this state when, on the 27th of September, Mr. Cruso, a British military surgeon, arrived at the mouth of the river, and, after some detention in the camp of the besiegers, was permitted to enter the fort. He brought letters from Colonel Campbell, the gallant defender of Mangalore, full of admiration of the defence of Onore conducted by its commander. The surgeon also brought letters from General Macleod, which, as might be expected from that officer, were satisfactory in no respect, excepting only that they expressed his esteem for the hero of Onore, and his admiration of the glorious defence that had been made. Torriano had written letters to Macleod, which Lutoph Ali pretended to forward; it now appeared that he had withheld the whole of this correspondence.

After all, there was no great improvement in the conduct of the enemy, or the condition of the besieged. Rumours of treachery also reached the ears of the English commandant, and he was obliged to use the most vigilant precautions, sleeping very close to the chief breach. Lutoph Ali was recalled by the sultan, or the chief commander of the Mysorean armies; and a Mysorean, a bigoted Mohammedan, assumed the command of the blockading force. Torriano immediately addressed this person, General Mow Mirza Khan, expressing the hope that the terms of the armistice would be loyally observed in future. Mirza professed acquiescence in all that the British officer required, and proffered his friendship in terms of lofty adulation. Mirza falsified all these fine professions almost the moment they were made. The blockade was more strict than ever. Mirza also sought, under various pretences, to get a large body of troops within the British lines; and especially insisted upon the necessity of sending four hundred men within the English works, to repair two of the sultan's ships which lay in the river. This was first demanded by his predecessor, and was now pertinaciously urged by Mirza. Torriano satisfied himself with cold refusals; but finding that Mirza persisted in the urgency of his suit, and hearing that force was to be employed, the English captain sent a peremptory refusal. The communication, as described by Forbes, is so characteristic,

that it will interest the reader, who cannot fail to admire the heroic and indomitable man:—"Captain Torriano, justly incensed, desired the second emissary to acquaint his master that, conceiving the request to have been first made in obedience to the sultan's commands, while his own mind reprobated his conduct, he had preserved great moderation in his answer, which he flattered himself would have been ascribed to its true source, a personal delicacy to Mirza. But since a repetition of the demand had been made, he deemed it an insolent puerility, so little becoming the character of Mirza, that he hoped he did not err in imputing it to the shortsighted policy and chicanery of the Brahmins by whom he was surrounded. That the proper time for restoring the ships would be when the sultan's troops were able to take the outworks in which they stood; until that event, the commander was determined not only to keep possession of the vessels, but if wood for fuel was not immediately supplied for the garrison, the ships would be broken up for that purpose."

After this Mirza became exceedingly hostile, and in various ways broke through the armistice in an ostentatious and violent manner. Torriano prepared to renew hostilities, when the Mysore commander, alarmed at the possible consequence to himself of having provoked such a result, made apologies, but even while he made them was devising fresh expedients for depriving the garrison of opportunity to procure provisions. Among the various military qualities of Torriano was the faculty of obtaining information of the purposes and proceedings of the enemy. He carried on communications with Mangalore through the medium of a spy, after he found that letters which the Mysorean general promised to convey were detained. The account given of the agent employed by Torriano for this purpose, by Forbes, is extremely interesting. He thus describes the *modus operandi* of this emissary, and the peculiar personage himself:—"Although the daring spy had to pass through the enemy's camps before Onore and Mangalore, he effected the purpose required by entering through a hole in the wall of the latter fortress, when strictly blockaded by Tippoo Sultan. The messenger returned with Colonel Campbell's answer, and being then desired to take whatever sum he thought proper, from a bag of venetians placed before him, he not only declined this mode of remuneration, but submitted it entirely to the generosity of the commandant; and further requested that he would become his banker, declaring that he would continue to serve him faithfully, and would never re-



ceive any reward until he might conceive that he was suspected by the enemy, when he should avail himself of the fruit of his labours to such an extent as, in his opinion, he could carry off free from molestation. . . . He was a squalid, meagre figure, without the smallest appearance of enterprise, but possessing great acuteness and firmness of character . . . . The period at length arrived when he called upon the commandant, and informing him that he had reason to conclude himself suspected by the enemy of holding an intercourse with the fort, he must consult his safety by a precipitate and secret flight. To this no objection could fairly be made. The garrison had essentially benefited in many instances by his firmness and fidelity, and he was entitled to trace out his own line of conduct whenever it seemed most advisable. On parting, Captain Torriano was not without anxiety for his safety; he told him the fate of Onore could not long remain undecided; that, should he survive until that period, it was his resolution to reward his services still further by settling on him a pension, provided he could contrive to join him in any of the company's districts. He was then desired to remunerate himself to the fullest extent of his wishes, and ample means set before him for the purpose. He was, however, satisfied with little, saying that, in the event of his being seized, and much money discovered upon him, the very circumstance would prove his destruction. He then took his leave, and passed the English posts; but whether he succeeded in effecting his escape into the interior part of the country, or was taken in the attempt and put to death, has never been known, no tidings having ever been heard of him since that period."

By some critics the opinion has been entertained that this spy was after all in the interest of the enemy, or that he ultimately became so. The opinions of Forbes are the most reliable, as he was well acquainted with the views of Torriano himself, who was his friend, and he had also the narrative of Surgeon Cruso to guide him in his memoirs, and Cruso was the diplomatist of the little garrison from the time of his arrival until the war was over. Through the medium of the spy, Colonel Campbell sent word from Mangalore that he had reason to believe an attack on the garrison of Onore was contemplated in spite of the armistice. Torriano took effectual measures to prevent its success, but such news much increased his anxieties. The next day a letter and some provisions came from General Macleod, whose conduct was precisely that which Mill, with such terseness,

describes:—"The Mysorean general, finding that all other modes had failed of causing the garrison to depart during the armistice, adopted plans to seduce the allegiance of the sepoys. In this he was successful; they were loyal only so long as fortune favoured the brave. The sepoys within had to be watched as vigilantly as the Mysoreans without. Thus the year 1783 closed over the still beleaguered and suffering garrison. Mirza, in defiance of all military honour, and of his own word, received the deserters, who, as the year 1784 began, became still more numerous." In January pestilence spread rapidly. Mr. Cruso, the surgeon, thus describes its effects:—"Disease was now so prevalent, that hardly one man in the fort remained untainted; eight or ten died daily, and so soon became offensive that a number of graves were constantly kept in readiness; but the dogs, savage with hunger, generally tore up the dead bodies at night, and strewed the outworks with their mangled remains."

At this juncture a British officer, an ensign, deserted to the enemy, and a numerous body of native soldiers accompanied him. This was the heaviest blow the suffering garrison had received, and not until then did the head of the noble Torriano droop. Still his gallant heart bore up against all calamities, his courage fell not. It soon became obvious by the proceedings of the enemy that the English officer who had forsaken his country and his honour had given every information which his previous position enabled him to possess. This was a fresh task upon the vigilance of the unslumbering commandant. Before the month of January closed, the condition of the garrison and the town from disease and hunger became truly horrible. Forbes thus describes it, basing his description upon the account of Cruso:—"The fortress exhibited a dreadful scene; the hospitals overflowed with patients in every stage of the horrid disorder already mentioned. The bodies of the diseased were for the most part so distended by putrid air as scarcely to leave a trace of the human frame; and it was with difficulty a feature could be distinguished in the countenance; while their laborious breathing indicated every appearance of strangulation. The ear could nowhere escape the groans of the dying, nor the eye avoid these shocking spectacles; but why should language attempt to describe distress, which the conduct of the sufferers paints in more vivid colours? These poor wretches, formerly subjects of a sovereign whose soul never knew mercy nor felt for human woe, when the victorious flag of Britain first waved on the ramparts of Onore, fled to it as an



asylum from the sultan's oppressions, and received protection; yet now did these devoted beings, snatching a transient degree of strength from despair, crawl into the public road, and waiting there until the commanding officer went his evening rounds, prostrated themselves at his feet, imploring permission to quit this dreadful scene, and, as a lighter evil, meet the vengeance of an incensed tyrant. Their prayer was granted, and the same principle of national honour, which originally ensured them protection, was now extended for their safety. Proper persons were appointed to see them go out in small parties after it was dark, hoping by this precaution that such as were not too much exhausted to reach the enemy's lines unperceived might, from their deplorable condition, excite the commiseration of the sentinels at the outposts, and ultimately reach the distant villages. The following morning presented a dreadful spectacle. On the preceding evening eighty-eight of the inhabitants, men, women, and children, had been permitted to leave the fort; but were so entirely exhausted that their route to the sultan's trenches was traced by a line of dead bodies, with the more aggravated spectacle of living infants sucking the breast of their dead mothers."

Even the horrors of Kars, during the Russian war of 1855-56, did not surpass in intensity those of Onore during this faithless and terrible blockade. With the increase of sickness came the increase of treason:—"All the sepoys posted in the outworks, headed by their jemautdar, had agreed to desert to the enemy the following night. The guards were directly withdrawn from the outworks, and the guns brought into the fort. The jemautdar, suspected to be the ringleader, was put in irons, and sent into close confinement; where, conscious of his guilt, he committed suicide."

Torriano now addressed General Macleod, who still kept sailing about the coast, effecting no good, and doing much mischief. The letter is a touching memorial of the glorious soldier:—"Regardless of my own fate, I cannot but acutely feel the sufferings of my brave comrades, who, although now greatly reduced in number, a prey to disease, surrounded by death, and deceived by fruitless promises of relief, still adhere to me. Within the short period of six weeks, five hundred persons, soldiers and natives, have fallen victims to a cruel pestilence which rages within these walls. Desertion nearly keeps pace with death; so serious and so incredible is the former, that amongst the number lately gone over to the enemy is a British officer.

"Mirza is daily urging us in the strongest terms and most threatening manner to capitulate. Every means in my power shall be exerted to defend this place while a grain of rice remains for subsistence; but I trust the British arms will not be so shamefully tarnished as to admit this fortress unsupported to fall into the enemy's hands. Of my few officers, death has deprived me of one, desertion of another; my garrison is reduced to sixty effective men. The quantity of provisions remaining in the fort is very small, and great part of the rice is much damaged.

"The enemy have received a strong reinforcement, and the buxey informs me they are to be increased by ten additional battalions; on their arrival more hostile measures will be adopted.

"I have great reason to be apprehensive for the safety of Fortified Island.

"I will not relinquish the hope that I shall not be left to a capitulation, even though accompanied by the best terms, and originating in the most absolute necessity."

A form of disease new to the garrison, scurvy, broke out in the beginning of February; but this was checked by the skill of Cruso and the sanitary measures of the commandant.

On the 4th of March Fortified Island was attacked and taken by the foe. The sepoys were enlisted in Tippoo's service; they always sympathised with the fortunate. The English officers were robbed. The capture of the island was contrary to the agreement existing; and when Torriano demanded redress and its restoration, the Mysorean commander forged a story which proves in a striking manner the utter faithlessness and falsehood of the native character in India in every grade of life among Mohammedans. Dr. Cruso thus relates the fabrication by which the Mohammedan general accounted for his having possession of the island and of the British prisoners:—"Extraordinary as it may appear to those unacquainted with the duplicity and chicanery of the Indian character, Mirza positively denied having attacked the island; and gravely replied that the English officer commanding there had for some time given great disgust to his sepoys, by refusing them proper provisions, whilst he luxuriously feasted upon poultry and liquors sent from time to time for the use of the gentlemen at Onore. At the time his people were thus disaffected, this imprudent officer endeavoured to seduce the wife of a naique, who was by caste a Brahmin, and at length had recourse to violence. On this outrage the husband flew to his comrades, interested them and their je-







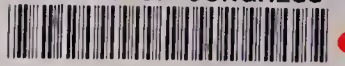








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